

Most successful Feed the Children auction ever

Raised more than \$26,000 including donation of a van

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With a goal of raising \$10,000, the Optimist Club of Chilliwack was thrilled to have raised \$11,425 at the fourth annual Feed the Children Dinner/Auction on May 27.

The Optimist Club of Chilliwack would like to thank the community of Chilliwack, especially their corporate sponsors, Mertin GM, the Times, and Hawk FM, for making the Feed the Children dinner\auction the most successful event to date.

Not only was \$11,425 in cash gathered, but the donation of a van from Mertin GM put the total raised at \$26,325.

The Mertin GM van will help with the delivery of approximately 500 lunches to 12 schools each day. The keys to the van were handed over to Irene Wesenberg, president of the Optimist Club of Chilliwack.

The Feed the Children program started with recognizing a need in the community for students going to school hungry. Citizen Advisory Committee to the Federal Corrections started out very small with one school and financial support from the school district. The program grew to the point that there is now a non-profit organization to handle and raise the money.

The Optimist Club of Chilliwack, an international organization, while in discussion with Donna Yates, recognized that they could help to assist this program. The Optimist Club's mandate is to aid and encourage the development of youth in the belief that the giving of one's self in service to others will advance the well-being of humankind, community life and the world.

Five years ago they donated \$750 to this project and decided to make Feed the Children a yearly dinner/auction to help support the community. The event has grown yearly and last year with the help of the community the club was able to raise \$10,000 for Feed the Children.

The Feed the Children program has been working tirelessly for five years, starting with one school, and has now turned into delivery of lunches to 12 schools in the community. The hot lunches provide students with daily nutrients, which improves concentration, study habits and socialization skills. The lunches also show that the community cares.

It takes a team of volunteers who daily give themselves to provide the lunches. The school district provides two workers for four hours a day to augment the volunteers who deliver the food to the schools. Other community sponsors provide the vegetables, breads and meats, and offenders from the Community Correctional Center (CCC) grow organic vegetables to provide healthy lunches for these students. It is an awesome community endeavour where the rewards are our future citizens.

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