

Rocmaura

a community of caring people

Foundation News July 2020 Pandemic Edition

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the lives of everyone around the world have been disrupted, causing uncertainty in everyday life. Non-profit charitable organizations like Rocmaura Foundation have also been hit hard. With large public gatherings cancelled, the Foundation had to think outside the box and moved its 22nd major annual fundraising Gala, from the Saint John Trade and Convention Centre, to ONLINE in June. “We were worried how we were going to be able to raise the funds that we have in the past, in order to make life better for our residents in their home away from home,” says Foundation Director, Sally Cummings.



“We usually get together for a large auction, dinner and dance,” says Cummings. This year, event goes ordered out at home before the show, choosing to dine in from Thandi’s & the House of Chan restaurants, both of whom donated 15% of sales back to Rocmaura.



Attendees joined the ARMCHAIR GALA via ZOOM, for an Evening of Laughs with Comedian James Mullinger and Host, Meteorologist Cindy Day. There was a surprise guest, Dr. Jennifer Russell, the NB Medical Officer of Health, who gave us a glimpse into what it has been like to lead the Province of NB through this crisis. Dr. Russell, who many may not realize is also a music major and plays in her own jazz band, performed a piece on her saxophone for us as an unexpected treat!



“We hoped that people would still donate money that they usually set aside for our cause,” says Cummings. All funds raised go to enhance the quality of life of Rocmaura’s 150 residents. Tickets cost \$50, down from the usual \$125 price tag, but everyone received a tax receipt for their donations. Many businesses who normally buy a table for \$1250, thankfully still did so. Others, like the City of Saint John, were not able to support this year, which was understandable during these tough economic times.



A few hundred people zoomed in for the evening at the Saint John Theatre Company, but many more suppliers and local companies generously supported the event. In all, over \$77,000 was raised from the Gala. “Supporters had a lot of fun being involved from home, and not having to get dressed up and go out,” says Cummings.

The Armchair Gala allowed many bubbles of friends to gather for the first time on their decks while maintaining proper social distancing. Foundation supporter Denise Long moved her big screen TV outside the cottage and tuned in around the campfire.



Denise Long

Yesterday at 1:50 PM · 🌐

Putting the final touches on my glam girl bonfire Rocmaura fundraiser event.

Tv hooked up and ready for Zoom

Chairs ready

Drinks being chilled

Social distances snacks made

Wood piled for bonfire

I am ready for my guest!!!!!!!!!!!!

[#watchingjmesmullinger](#)

[#cottagefundraiser](#)



That was the first virtual gala of its type hosted in New Brunswick and it was quite complicated to arrange technically but definitely worthwhile. “We had a few technical hiccups, but I think that added to the fun,” says Cummings. “This is the reality we are now all living in. Whether working from home, or meeting via your laptop, we have all had to adapt to these unusual times. We are all in this together as they say.”

What’s next for the Foundation?

We have not held our enormous fall silent auction, which normally raises \$30,000. With the help of a summer student, we hope we can move that online too. With so many businesses struggling, we don’t want to stress the local economy further by asking for gifts in kind, but we have a storage room full of items ready to go, and we know people have become seasoned to shopping this way. To donate auction items 643-7090.

Wardrobe Project Gets Kick Start

Don Mitchener and Scott McCain made two incredible surprise donations during our online Gala that are breathing new life into an important project in our home. Mitchener, who has already donated four wardrobe units, went off script to announce he’s giving six more! Each wardrobe costs \$3500 to build. His donation totals \$21,000!

VIEW OF ROOM BEFORE RENOVATION



The Foundation has been working away at this project since Mitchener was a board member in 2007. The Foundation has finished three courts in the home since then, and is working on completing the last wing of 40 wardrobes at a cost of \$140,000. This renovation is long overdue, being the first major refurbishment to residents’ rooms in our home’s 50 years.

VIEW AFTER RENOVATION



Scott McCain phoned in a \$10,000 donation, which will build another three units, and Atlantic Millwork, who construct the wardrobes, has offered to provide a free one in the next order. “The Foundation will be able to immediately begin construction of at least ten more wardrobe units on Terrace Court, which is fantastic,” says Cummings. “With residents spending more time in their rooms, getting a refurbished room will be very a welcome gift.” Residents like June Lane have anxiously been asking when the construction will begin!

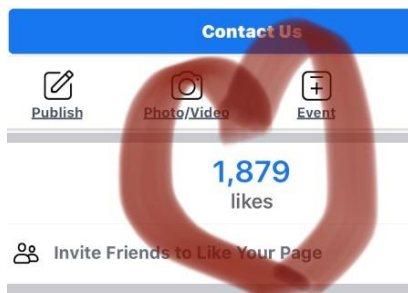
Rocmaura during COVID-19



Since Rocmaura closed its doors to visitors in mid-March, this is the “new normal,” seeing relatives by window visits.



During this time, the Foundation shifted its focus to more of a communications effort, to help inform relatives about their loved ones on social media. Followers have grown from 1200 to well over 1800 on Rocmaura’s Facebook. Please like and share our page!



The Foundation also sold CORONA MERCH. “The souvenir T-shirts raised another \$25 each, and will be a memento of what we have been going through,” says Cummings. “The message reminds everyone to wear their masks, stay safe, and most importantly, BE KIND, a message reiterated by Dr. Jennifer Russell.”



Executive Director Sheana Mohra is making sure Rocmaura takes all necessary measures to keep the coronavirus away. Extra staff have been hired to take temperatures, provide safe recreation activities, and screen everyone before entering the building.

“We have all been working really hard to keep our most vulnerable safe,” Mohra says. The home has incurred a lot of extra expenses in doing so, with staffing costs, personal protective equipment, and cleaning supplies. “We go through about 200 masks a day.” With restrictions loosening, Rocmaura remains cautious about opening its doors.



Despite changing protocols, recreation staff have been creative to find ways to maintain a fun environment to keep residents stimulated. Bingo has always been a big hit, but seemingly difficult when you have to be six feet apart. Hallway bingo was invented, and everyone set up right outside their room doors.



Here is Monte Mooney playing a game around Easter. The long-time resident passed away in May. She was frequent

Foundation donor, making many memorial gifts, and then donated a wardrobe in memory of her parents.

Residents also look forward to live entertainers visiting, so instead of cancelling, the Recreation Department surprised them with live performances from the courtyard, while residents watched from their windows and sang along from the comfort of their own rooms.



Thank you Foundation Board

Four people joined the Foundation Board this year including Lisa Savidant, Pat Miller, Joe O'Brien and Jen Butler. Board members volunteer their time generously for Rocmaura. Chair Emil Olsen has served for over 15 years. Their contributions and combined efforts help give our 150 residents their best life at Rocmaura. If you are interested in becoming part of our team, please contact Sally Cummings at foundation@rocmaura.com.

Staff Appreciation

All of staff's extra efforts were recognized during staff appreciation week. "It's all about teamwork. At Rocmaura everyone chips in to maintain a safe environment," says Director of Nursing Shirley Fraser. Community members also applauded our frontline staff.



Key Industries donated T-shirts, the police stopped by, and Chipman Hill Suites gave away gift cards to show their support, as well as many Coffee and Treat drops.



"As much as we miss the way things were and miss seeing our family, the most important thing is to do what is best for all our loved ones. It is not about us, but about keeping safe in this difficult time. It will end eventually and we as families just need to be patient. All of the staff at Rocmaura has worked so hard at keeping communication open, giving us opportunities to connect—FaceTime, pictures on Facebook, window visits, phone calls and E-mails. We are so fortunate to have peace of mind knowing such caring staff is doing their best for our loved ones. Thank you!" **Mary T. Chisholm**

TP Games

With all the hard work, there is also time for a little fun. Staff were treated to a take away breakfast, received their service awards, and Mission Director Jean Marie Dionne invented the "TP Games." This Olympic-style competition consisted of various coronavirus-themed competitions. Some events included tossing toilet paper rolls into homemade toilets, flushing our worries down the drain, and knocking toys that look like the coronavirus off the table.



Window Visits

While Zoom has proven to be helpful for companies, schools and meetings, it is hard to formulate the closeness of seeing someone you love in person. Nira McRae made the most of her window visits with her father, Sterling. On his birthday, she dropped off a cake and they shared a sweet moment through the glass.



As we embrace the yellow phase, Rocmaura has transitioned to a system for families to meet face to face. Maintaining a strict schedule is crucial to making it work. As of July 6, a newly hired coordinator is organizing outdoor visits in the courtyard Monday to Friday. To arrange a visit please contact: Pamela.clark@rocmaura.com (506) 643-7064.





Applause

Maintenance Manager Harry Searle who has worked at Rocmaura for over 40 years, has been recognized for his innovative solution to create an isolation unit in the event of an outbreak. His hoarding plan has been adopted by the provincial rapid response team. The moveable tarp

barrier prevents residents from wandering in. Harry's recognition is well deserved. Congratulations!

Plant a Seed and Watch it Grow



A beautiful new perennial flowerbed is in full bloom in our courtyard thanks to support from many generous family members who helped create our new Mother's Garden.

Due to Covid-19, we weren't able to accept

Mother's Day flowers this year, so families gave Rocmaura Foundation \$180 in donations in place of deliveries. Thanks to Cedarcrest Gardens who designed the layout and graciously gave us 20% off. Milkweed will attract beautiful Monarch butterflies. Aconitum, Monarda, and Gaillardia were also planted.

Thanks to our management team who brought in their gardening tools and jumped right in the dirt to help with the weeding and planting. Many thanks to our residents and their families who helped make something beautiful happen for all to enjoy: Margaret Stephen, June McEachern, Joan Ingalls and Mary MacDougall. Thank you for your generous donations!

We also received \$120 from Dutch resident Hendrien Kippers for tulips, which will be planted in the fall. Many thanks to Carla Olive, the Spear family, and Saint John Horticultural Association who also donated and planted the rest of the beautiful flowers in our courtyard.

A Resident Story

Most days you will find Hendrien Kippers buried in a book. The 92 year old has a voracious love for literature. One of our summer students Emma Carey discovered she is a published author!

Kippers wrote a collection of poems reflecting on the 200-year history of her much loved home on Hampton Road. "Songs of the Ancestral Home" describes the social and cultural landscape of her friends, family and the City of Saint John.

Kippers has a degree in English Literature from the University of New Brunswick Saint John, and is an active member of the local literary and arts community.

Her book was published in 2014. Kippers is an excellent reminder that age is just a number, and that it did not keep her from accomplishing one of her dreams.



After several weeks inside, residents are happy to get out enjoying the courtyard. This is where family visits are now taking place.

Foundation Year in Review

It was a difficult year that began with a looming strike of CUPE employees, followed by COVID-19. The Foundation is grateful to our healthcare workers and frontline staff who have been working hard to keep our home safe. We are humbled by local companies, Tim Horton's Murphy Restaurants, McCafe, Ok Tire, and family members like the Farren's, and the Harrington's and many other anonymous donors who have given generously, from dilly bars to hand sewn facemasks.



We are amazed by the outpouring of community support. Thank you to companies like Irving Oil who donated 10 cases of Hand Sanitizer, Routinify who gave us 10 fire tablets and the Department of Social Development which delivered 15 iPads for residents to facetime with their families.



2019-20 Foundation Wins

- Tour the World Gala raised over \$101,000 & involved over 60 volunteers
- Silent & Live auctions raised over \$31,000
- Resident Items (wheelchairs, clothing) donated to home \$8700 value
- Direct Mail Campaign raised \$4000
- Wardrobe Project raised \$9000
- Memorial Donations \$10,500
- Club Room Rentals \$4000
- Foundation Café \$450
- Primo Parking Spot \$1000
- Curling Fun Spiel raised over \$9000

Thank you to all Supporters!



Thanks Atlantic Windoor
\$1000 Van Sponsor!



If your company is interested to find out about getting your logo on our Rocmaura Bus, or about rental opportunities to help support our resident outings, please contact Sally Cummings (506) 643-7090.

New Staff Scholarship Established



Family of the late Aubrey Reid have set up a scholarship in his name, for staff at Rocmaura. He passed away December 27, 2018. The “Aubrey Reid Memorial Bursary” will be available to all employees to further their education. The fund was made possible with a \$13,000 donation from his family and the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception.

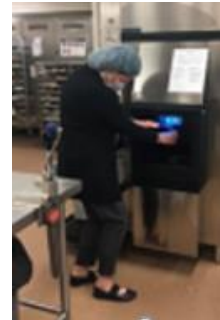
“Aubrey had a very special personal relationship with the Sisters of Charity, and in the last decade of his life, he was an active member of the Rocmaura Inc. Board of Directors, and served as board Chair,” says his sister Heather Oakley.

Aubrey spent his entire career advocating for and assisting individuals to reach their greatest potential. He coached students and employees at New Brunswick Community College, served in governmental advisory positions, mentored his staff at Social Development, and served on numerous community committees and working groups to improve the lives of people in the city and province. His love for Rocmaura and his belief in equal opportunity for post secondary education and learning will enable staff to access \$1000 annually for the next several years, to advance their learning.

Oakley says, “Taking care of our aging population is a growing concern. People are living longer and presenting to Nursing Homes with multiple complex medical and social issues. It is our hope that this bursary will provide ongoing educational opportunities for staff to be clinically current in their everyday care.”

Foundation Grants Wishes & Enhances Quality of Life

- \$3500 Rehab Equipment – prevents pressure sores
- \$900 Pocket Talkers - helps residents hear
- \$500 Table Cloths – for more homey mealtimes
- \$600 Welcome baskets for new residents
- \$2500 Geri Chairs for transporting residents
- \$5100 Ice Machine – improves hydration & health



You remember the first person to hold your hand...will you remember the last?

Please consider a donation to Rocmaura Foundation. Your help is needed to enhance our residents' quality of life and provide some of the comforts of home not funded by government.



Make life better for a friend, neighbour or family member in their “home away from home” at Rocmaura Nursing Home.

Contact Foundation Office (506) 643-7090



Welcome Aboard!

Emma Murray is the Foundation Summer SEED Student. She graduated from St. Macs with high honours and is heading to Kings College in Halifax to pursue her studies in English. Good luck!

Thank You to our Generous Donors!

Edith Chilton	\$3500 wheelchair scale for Garden Court <i>in memory of Elsie Hersey</i>
Saint John Rotary Club	\$3200 wheelchair scale for Terrace Court
Octavio Ribeiro	\$3500 for 2 Thera glide rocking chairs
Lawton's	\$1500 Geri Chair
Chandler	\$1500 Recliner Chair
Canaport LNG	\$5200 Memory Lane where residents reminisce
McDonald's	1500 coffee coupons for "Have a Coffee with Dot"
Rose Daley	\$10,000 <i>in memory of Lauza Hachey</i>
Bob Stewart	\$1000 annual donation
Lynn & John Wack	\$1000 <i>in memory of Louise Bromfield</i>
Harold Marks	\$1000 <i>in memory of Marlene Marks</i>
Joanne McGraw	\$1000 <i>in memory Florence McLaughlin</i>
Frank Fitzpatrick	\$2000 annual donation
Donna Abbott	Joined Our Monthly Giving Club!
Knights Columbus 6595	\$2500 for Terrace Court

Contact Us!

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Sally Cummings,
Director

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2020 ARM CHAIR GALA THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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SPECIAL THANKS TO

Heather Oakley & Friends and
the Sisters of Charity
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THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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