

## **Rocmaura Foundation Inc. Annual Report    April 1, 2020 - Mar.31, 2021**

If this year was described as a dance move, non-profits did a big PIVOT, while Rocmaura Foundation was doing the HUSTLE, to keep things moving along. Our organization fared very well, due to our community of caring people, our suppliers, donors, and families, and because we adapted quickly to raise funds during some of the most challenging times.

In mid-March 2020, there were no more in-person gatherings and we had to change the way we thought about everything. All of a sudden Plexiglas, hording areas, PPE, and video calls were part of daily life at Rocmaura Nursing Home. Our community dealt with travel restrictions, restaurant closures, and social distancing protocols. Haircuts went out, and window visits were in. Temperature taking, hand sanitizer, and masks helped reduce the risk of exposure from Covid-19.

While other charities cancelled their summer BBQ's and major fundraisers, Rocmaura Foundation sold Covid T-shirts, and was the first to transition to an online Gala. The Coronavirus forced us to move our annual event up, from September to June, via Zoom. It was new technology, uncharted territory, and it was a huge success, with the Gala net total raised \$75,490, actually higher than our previous in-person event of \$53,940!

While our online auction brought in only a fraction of what our silent and live auctions normally do, \$5280 compared to \$31,240 last year, the up side is that we did not have the costs of a \$35,000 facility rental to serve 500 meals, band, or slick production teams. Our Foundation Director shot and edited all the elements for the program on an I-phone! Audiovisual companies had not yet adapted to hosting online events, and while it felt a bit frantic behind the scenes, viewers loved being part of it all. Many thanks to the Saint John Theatre Company, James Mullinger, and Cindy Day who were up for the challenge, and our special guest Jennifer Russell who treated us to a song on her Saxophone, amidst her busy schedule as Chief Medical Health Officer of NB. It was quite a show!

### **WARDROBE PROJECT**

While Covid brought so much uncertainty, we expected giving to decrease, but donors stepped in with major gifts. Don Mitchener made a surprise donation of \$17,500 for the wardrobe project, and Scott McCain, a first time supporter, made a \$10,000 gift, while Atlantic Millworks donated a free unit with our order. In all, we were able to install eleven more wardrobe units on Terrace. This brought joy to one resident in particular, June Lane, who had been waiting for several months, after being featured on last spring's direct mail brochure. This project has been ongoing since 2007, with the Foundation raising \$420,000 toward the first major renovation to resident rooms in our home's 50 years. We now have only thirty units left to build at a cost of \$105,000.

### **MAJOR GIFTS**

We also received a major donation of \$25,000 from an anonymous donor in November 2020, and we received a \$10,000 bequest in memory of Edna Dibblee-Wellnar. She lived at Rocmaura until the age of 103. Her family appreciated her care over her eight and a half year stay. The Knights of Columbus 6595 Council also continued to support us with three \$2500 donations for things such as personal care items, body pillows, and music therapy programs. Two \$3200 gifts also helped purchase two digital wheelchair scales; one in memory of Elsie Hersey, and the other donated by the Rotary Club of Saint John. These help weigh residents more easily, without use of ceiling lifts to help maintain proper nutrition and health. A donation

from Octavio Ribeiro for \$3300 also purchased two more Theraglide rocking chairs, (his 6th) to help residents self soothe. JDA Electric answered our call and donated a two-way telephone to give more privacy during window visits. Several other annual donations help fund items on our wish list including more pocket talkers. The devices help seniors participate in conversations and allow families to have more meaningful visits with their loved ones.

## **WISHES GRANTED**

\$5100	Ice making machine for better hydration
\$3200	Wheelchair Scale donated by Rotary Club for Terrace Court
\$3200	Wheelchair Scale donated by Edith Chilton for Garden Court
\$700	5 pocket talkers to help residents hear
\$900	Tablecloths for homier dining
\$600	New resident welcome baskets
\$1300	2 Geri Chairs for Trinity Court
\$3300	2 Theraglide Rocking Chairs for Trinity Court
\$4600	Rehab Equipment
\$2000	Harold Marks Paintings Framed for Art Gallery Project
\$1200	Phone donated by JDA Electric

Donors have helped make many of our wishes come true this past year. We have received more than \$26,000 worth of gifts-in-kind including TV's, wheelchairs and walkers. Families have donated everything from craft supplies to bingo prizes. We received a beautiful collection of 14 paintings by Catherine McAvity appraised at \$5400, and had another collection of 12 artworks by Harold Marks framed and hung on Terrace Court. Our Foundation's Art Gallery Project was praised recently by inspectors touring our home.

## **OUR SUCCESSES**

Our Direct Mail campaign more than tripled, growing from \$3780 in net donations to \$12,030 this year, and we now have a handful of monthly donors contributing on a regular basis.

Lotteries became a popular new way for many nonprofit charities to raise funds this year and this helped Rocmaura Foundation raise \$13,860. We launched a new Mission Possible 50/50 Draw, which raised \$4000 in December. It was wonderful to see in-house support like never before. Thirty percent of tickets were purchased by staff, using payroll deduction. A second draw in March raised \$3000.

We worried that without visitors in the home, our Donor Wall program might decline, but donations more than doubled from \$400 to \$1150. Families enjoyed seeing photos of our legacy tree budding with leaves, birds, and butterflies on our Facebook posts. Next year we plan to add new hummingbirds and dragonflies to the wall for new \$1000 and \$1500 donation levels.

## **GOING THE EXTRA MILE**

Vaccination day at Rocmaura was an unforgettable moment and all staff should be commended for helping residents get their first shots. Sally Cummings documented the important events by taking videos and photos to mark the experience.

Our Foundation Executive Director really changed gears this year, taking on more of a communications role for Rocmaura. When families were no longer able to visit, social media was their only means to see their loved ones. The Foundation purchased a new printer to make

photo ID badges for staff so Residents could see their caregiver's faces behind their masks. She also helped design new signage at the Parks and Burpee entrances to lessen the confusion for families over where to make deliveries and do window visits. Many people started working from home this year, and as Foundation Chair, I stayed on in the position for an additional year, until things settled down.

Rocmaura Foundation's mission to enhance our Resident's quality of life also grew to encompass more staff appreciation. Families donated gift cards to say thanks to our front line staff, which launched into frequent draws. The Foundation began arranging coffee drops. Companies like Tim Horton's and McCafe generously donated "a cup of Joe." Rocmaura received an outpouring of community support. Early in the pandemic, Irving Oil donated cases of hand sanitizer. The home received 15 iPads, 10 fire tablets from Routinify, hand-sewn masks, and face shields from Kent. The Foundation created a new Mothers Garden and planted tulip bulbs when families were not allowed to send flowers on Mother's Day.

### **IMPACT OF COVID-19**

Over the past year, businesses in our community have closed, travel ceased, and healthcare has experienced nursing shortages. Even our live auction winner had to cancel his trip to Greece, after bidding \$7000 for it at our Gala last year. We have been stuck in our own version of the movie Groundhog Day. Covid-19 has taken its toll on mental health. We have weathered uncertainty around the vaccine rollout.

We have become more aware of diversity and inclusion. When going through our second and third waves, and then the variants, we have experienced all kinds of trends, from shortages of toilet paper, disinfecting wipes, and yeast, to the growing popularity of pets.

With high demand for materials, and shortages of factory workers, the cost of medical equipment has increased. Our orders for Foundation wish list items like Geri chairs were delayed for several months. Our Club Room rentals stopped. Foundation Cafés and Spring Fling yard sale were also cancelled due to social distancing protocols. Our Curling Fun Spiel in February was postponed until next fall.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Our following on social media has exploded, with Facebook now at 2.3K followers. Our reach is 40,000, 85% women, as far away as the Philippines. Staff, who once used to run from the camera, are becoming comfortable with posts with thousands of views. Our donor retention rate is at its highest in a decade at over 40%. We have acquired 200 new donors this year, and total revenues reached \$274,920 compared to \$202,670 last year.

The pandemic has shown us we can adapt. Canada Helps predicts online giving will continue to grow, and that is highlighting our need for better website tools. We experimented with new platforms like SimplyK, Stripe, and Bidding Owl, and we have made it easier for donors to E-transfer funds. We are looking forward to changes in Provincial regulations allowing online lotteries, and we foresee hosting new HYBRID events; imagine the possibility of guest speakers joining us from around the world or hosting a telethon right here in our home!

### **FUTURE PLANS**

Our future goals include strategic planning, updating our bylaws, and broadening the culture of philanthropy in our home. Establishing endowment funds, an annual giving program, and improving online tools are also on our list of things to look into. We would also like to investigate

a bus rental program, and create an employee-giving plan. We see possibilities for new alliances with the Imperial Theatre and Saint John Theatre Company to live-stream entertainment to our residents. We will continue community partnerships with the Saint John Rotary Club, and Sally Cummings joined the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals this year. We have a completely new slate of Municipal politicians that we look forward to getting to know, and a Federal election on the horizon. CERB and other funding programs will draw to a close, and hopefully life as we know it, will get back to the NEW normal. We commend all who weathered this storm.

## **NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

Thank you to our wonderful board members, who volunteer their time generously. Many thanks to Rod Flood who attended Rocmaura Inc. meetings, Sister Anita Naves who has ensured for the last decade, that we follow the mission of our founders, the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception. Thanks to Brian Fitzpatrick our Treasurer, and KPMG who does our annual audit. We welcomed aboard five new directors including Jen Butler, Denise Long, Billy Tyler, Heather White-Brittain, and Anamika Jain. Many thanks to our outgoing members June Creamer Cormier, Lisa Savidant, Sister Sandra Barrett, and Jocelyn Graham.

While Covid affected long-term care facilities in a major way this year, we are blessed we have remained safe, thanks to the hard work of our management and caring staff. Special thanks to Recreation Manager Pamela Clark and Finance Manager Theresa Mercer, whose job descriptions have blown up this past year. Much appreciation to Janice Carr for keeping on top of all the new payroll deductions, and most importantly, we cannot express enough gratitude to Executive Director Sheana Mohra who fearlessly led everyone calmly and bravely through this year.

We have much to be proud of, including rolling up our sleeves to an 82% staff vaccination rate and zero cases in the home. Thinking about the lives we affect, how we make a difference, and the importance of our cause, makes us realize just what an unforgettable year this was. We are thankful to our faithful supporters who have come forward with matching gifts and responded to our Fund-a-Need campaigns when we felt everyone was just too “zoomed out” to host a second virtual Gala this June. We appreciate all our community cheerleaders, who help us make life better for our residents in their “home away from home.”

**Rocmaura Foundation Inc.**



**Emil Olsen – Chair**

**Rocmaura Foundation Inc.**



**Sally Cummings – Executive Director**