

Register-Star

NEWS

"Winter Blast" benefits Columbia Memorial Hospital, Kaaterskill Care *Club Helsinki hosts 8th annual event*

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HUDSON — From the size of a family wedding to a proper gala, the eighth annual Winter Blast to benefit the Columbia Memorial Hospital and Kaaterskill Care Nursing & Rehabilitation Center continues to grow in attendance and participation. On Saturday night, the event went off without a hitch, as guests attended the celebration at Club Helsinki. This marks the second consecutive year that the club has hosted the fundraiser.

With 250 attendees, the benefit raised over \$100,000 in ticket sales alone, an increase of just over 75 percent from eight years ago when the event was held at the Inn at Leeds in Greene County. That event raised \$24,000.

"This started out very small, like it was a family wedding," Kaaterskill Care's Director of Nursing Regina Doebler said. "You knew everybody that was there and now it is people from all over that come."

The growth in generosity that Doebler said she sees each year contributes to renovations in the Greene County Facility, whether it be the new rehabilitation room or new lobby.

Todd Zbytniewski, vice president of geriatric services at Kaaterskill Care added that they have come to rely on these types of events for financial help.

"These events perform capital improvements in the facilities to help us to provide an increase in the quality of care," Zbytniewski said. "It makes things better for the residents as well as improves the environment for the staff. So really, with reimbursement the way it is, as it continues to decline, we really depend on these events to make these capital improvements."

The strong core of supporters that have grown through the hospital and the community is really appreciated, Zbytniewski said.

The event featured 10 silent auction items that ranged from a week-long stay at a private, five-bedroom African estate overlooking the Indian Ocean and ballooning over the Hudson Valley for two, to a private two-and-a-half hour hawk walk, raptor flying session at Talons in Earlville, with an overnight B&B stay for two.

Entertainment was provided by the Glen David Andrews Band, a New Orleans style jazz group that performed into the later part of the night.

It is a community effort to make both our hospital strong and Kaaterskill Care both strong, Columbia-Greene Hospital Foundation Executive Director Elizabeth Gramkow said.

"It doesn't happen without everyone joining together and supporting it at whatever level they can and every donation makes a big difference to us."



On stage following the entrance of the Glen David Andrews Band, Kevin Delehanty (left) and Denise de Diego presented an inscribed token of appreciation to Richard and Debra Oliver of AOW Associates for their sponsorship. David Lee/Hudson-Catskill Newspapers