

Township of  
**Langley**



Est. 1873

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **INAUGURAL MAYOR'S CHARITABLE GALA A GREAT SUCCESS**

It was a night to remember that will benefit the community for years to come, and it was made possible thanks to generous local businesses, caring individuals, and hard-working volunteers.

The first annual Mayor's Charitable Gala was held Saturday, September 22 by the Township of Langley Firefighters' Charitable Society (TLFCS), Mayor Jack Froese, and Township Council at Darvonda Nurseries. A unique venue for the inaugural event, the greenhouse on 216 Street in Milner was decorated to celebrate the Gala's Farm to Table Fall Festival theme and gave 530 attendees a sneak peak of the upcoming Harvest Glow festival, while raising funds for the TLFCS.

During the Gala, which was presented by lead sponsor Coast Spas, guests were treated to a feast of locally-sourced gourmet food and entertainment by special musical guests Chad Brownlee and Shawn Austin. An abundance of activities designed to raise money for some very worthy causes was held, including a live auction that featured a fire truck full of wine that will be delivered to the recipient's home.

A goal of one million dollars had been set for the evening, to benefit the Langley Memorial Hospital Foundation's campaign for a new emergency department and MRI suite, and for other local charities and programs supported by the Firefighters' Charitable Society. While the final amount is still being totalled, organizers believe the gala has come close to meeting that mark.

"One incredibly generous donor, Ann Blaauw, contributed \$500,000 to the TLFCS specifically for the hospital project, and a further \$250,000 that is to be used by the firefighters for other Langley initiatives," said Mayor Jack Froese.

"The first annual Mayor's Charitable Gala was successful way beyond our expectations. We were absolutely overwhelmed by the generosity shown by everyone involved," Froese added. "The Township of Langley is a community that truly cares. It is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family because it is full of people who want to make a difference, are committed to making life better for others, and want to see our community thrive."

“The people of Langley can always be counted on to step up, help out, and give generously, and the Mayor’s Charitable Gala was no exception,” Froese said. “The money raised through this event will have a profound and long-lasting impact on our community and the health and wellbeing of our citizens, and we thank everyone who took part.”

Members of Township of Langley Firefighters IAFF Local 4550 had approached Mayor Froese in the spring with the idea of holding the Gala. Froese, who has seen the success of similar events in neighbouring communities, knew they were on to something special - and the community agreed.

The inaugural event sold out within days of tickets going on sale. Fifty dedicated volunteers committed their time and energy to organizing the event, and numerous people and businesses made generous donations and contributed services to ensure it was an unforgettable fundraiser.

“On duty or off, our firefighters are committed to serving the community where they live and work,” said Township of Langley Firefighters IAFF President Andy Hewitson. “With the Mayor’s Charitable Gala, we wanted to take that spirit of giving to a new level, to raise funds that will really make a difference, and raise the profile of our Charitable Society.”

“A lot of hard work went into making this event a success and it paid off with an incredible evening that will have a long-lasting impact for residents of the Township,” said Hewitson. “We couldn’t be happier with the outcome.”

The TLFCS collects and contributes over \$75,000 annually to its registered charitable partners and many local initiatives, including the BC Professional Firefighters’ Burn Fund, Canadian Cancer Society, Basics for Babies, and Muscular Dystrophy Canada. The TLFCS also initiated a healthy snack program in partnership with the Langley School District Foundation, which is currently offered in ten local schools with the goal to reach every school in the district.

“The Mayor’s Charitable Gala has benefitted some exceptional causes, and we encourage people to keep giving what they can throughout the year support these charities, which are keeping our community healthy, strong, and thriving,” Froese said.

The LMH Foundation’s “Emergency Response” campaign is raising funds to expand and enhance Langley Memorial Hospital’s emergency department and to build an MRI suite. The new facility is to be completed in 2020 and will reduce wait times, provide more privacy and separation for patients, add more treatment spaces, and create a separate ambulance lane and bay. To learn more and donate, visit **langleyer.com**.

The Township of Langley Firefighters’ Charitable Society will be launching its Kids Clothing Drive on November 1 and is getting ready to release its Firefighters and Furries 2019 calendar, in collaboration with the Langley Animal Protection Society. Learn more and give at **tlfcs.org**.

*For more information, contact [gala2018@iaff4550.org](mailto:gala2018@iaff4550.org) or Mayor Jack Froese at 604.533.6000 or [jfroese@tol.ca](mailto:jfroese@tol.ca).*