

Heartwood Better Together Community Celebration Banquet

The original motivations for hosting an annual banquet were simple: recognize our volunteers, recognize our partners, and bring everyone together for a shared experience. The central thought was that "It is difficult to be better together if we don't know who we are." While our various lunch time meetings, potlucks, and barbecues are useful for both information and fun, they are also very limited in that they include only a very small proportion of those who benefit from and contribute to Heartwood House.

The "Better Together" Banquet, held on Thursday April 23rd exceeded all of these expectations. There has been an outpouring of positive feedback. Many organizations invited diverse representation, and overheard countless times were phrases that started with "Wow, I never knew..." and this mostly had to do with developing an understanding of the wonderfully complex interconnectivity of relationships in the House.

People seemed moved the most by the way the volunteer team supported and celebrated each other. Despite many different backgrounds, abilities, and needs, a level of mutual respect has developed that was clearly in evidence even to those who were relative strangers to Heartwood House.

Derick Fage and TL Rader from Rogers TV did a wonderful job as hosts. Maureen refined the agenda so well that it was hard to believe this was an inaugural event. In fact, the evening concluded about 20 minutes ahead of schedule. We were all well fed if not overfed, and the St. Anthony staff were courteous and efficient.

Gillian Gailey (centre) our 2009 Heart of the House Award winner with Jackie Swedlove, heartwood board member and Warren Murphy, former maintenance staff person. Congratulations Gillian!

Lucas Rodgers, our 2009 Mike Ward Memorial Award winner with his proud mom! Congratulations Lucas.

Moe (HH Executive Director) with Ann from the Ottawa Valley Weavers. Ready for the grand event!

Our 2009 Heartwood Board of Directors (from left to right) Allison Moores, Fran Childs, Marilyn Evans, Jackie Swelove and our chair Keenan Wellar. Better Together thanks to your dedicated efforts!