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A big success for Alzheimer's Association

Event raises \$40,000 for Michigan Great Lakes Chapter

By Sheila Pursglove, Special Writer

PUBLISHED: February 28, 2008

Going once, going twice ... local radio and TV personality Lucy Ann Lance helped the Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Great Lakes Chapter raise \$40,000 Feb. 22 with live and silent auctions at the "Summer Somewhere: Daytona Beach '08" party. The money goes to support local programs and services for people with Alzheimer's disease, their family members and caregivers.

The atrium of the Morris Lawrence Building at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor was transformed into the racing circuit of Florida's Daytona Beach.

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The more than 300 attendees stepping in from the winter cold received a "Pit Pass" and

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a selection of fuzzy dice, sunglasses, binoculars and toy cars.

Partygoers strolled around "Pit Stops" on the "race track," manned by chefs from Arbor Hospice, Chelsea Community Hospital, Chelsea Retirement Community, Evangelical Homes, Glacier Hills Retirement Community, Hillside Terrace, and Silver Maples of Chelsea. Goodies included beef medallions, shrimp stir fry, crab cakes, chili, chicken strips, fried rice, pasta, salads, and a dazzling array of desserts.

For \$5, partygoers could get a photo taken at the wheel of a NASCAR race car. And one lucky person gave the winning bid for the real thing -- to ride in a pace car around Michigan International Speedway. That was just one of many items up for bid, including vacations in Florida and Arizona.

Steve Sarns, vice president of sales and marketing for the event's top sponsor, Ann Arbor-based NuStep Inc., handed over a company donation of \$10,000 to Longley - and then joined the band MannaFest to regale the audience with his rendition of "Brown-Eyed Girl."

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The local business community threw its support behind the event, donating many items for the auctions, and many of the partygoers hailed from the Chelsea and Dexter area.

"The Chelsea community has a big heart and that was fully evident as area residents and businesses stepped forward to embrace our cause," said Liz Longley, president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Great Lakes Chapter. "Our success with this event is due in large part to the hard work and generosity of many people in the Chelsea community - Gloria Mitchell, Wendy Broshar, Howdy Holmes, Biff and Suzie Weber, as well as Chelsea Retirement Community, Silver Maples, and Chelsea Community Hospital, to name just a few of our key supporters.

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"It was a great night for the Alzheimer's Association and for the people we serve."


Silver Maples of Chelsea was pleased to participate, said Executive Director Jerry Wilczynski.

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"It gave us a chance to share some excellent food from our chefs Mike Thayer and Tim Cook and to meet so many friends and co-supporters of the Alzheimer's Association," he said.

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"My wife Chris and I thoroughly enjoyed the music and the auction where we had an opportunity to help out with a winning bid of our item of choice - the University of Michigan Alzheimer's Association Golf Outing on July 14. I ask fellow golfers to come out and join with us on that day for a really good cause."

Chelsea teacher and artist Janet Alford was among the partygoers.

"The event was fantastic," she said. "My husband and I appreciate the hard work that went in to making such a successful event† for such a worthwhile† needy cause.† The venue was wonderful allowing room for the food, auction items, band, and fellowship."

Ginger Sissom, the Chapter's director of programs and organizational leadership, said she is especially enthused about the emphasis on brain health and helping people reduce their risk factors for Alzheimer's disease.

"The success of the event shows that we're on the right track and that our programs are meeting community needs," she said.

People who were unable to attend the event but want to lend their support can still make a donation by calling the Alzheimer's Association at (734) 677-3081 or going online to www.alz.org/mglc.



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