

NEIGHBORHOODS

Despite rain, spirits run high at Good Wil

Ginny White honored for her caring of community

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The Good-Wil Initiative, a local non-profit organization focused on supporting other organizations and businesses in the community, gave out its first annual "Ginny White Good-Wil Service Award." Last Sunday's event at the Fitchburg Senior Center was the finale to the Good Wil Brunch series, an initiative created to bring non-profit groups together for a greater good.

Although originally slated to take place outdoors at Monument Park, the constant drizzle forced the event inside. Those who braved the cool temperatures and constant misty conditions were welcomed by the sight of several outdoor games, including a large moonwalk. Inside, local vendors were set up around the perimeter of the Armory, providing everything from family amusements, raffles, food and a Chinese auction. A large stage was set up for the entertainment, which was provided by Wil Darcangelo and his five-piece infused jazz band.

"I was so preoccupied with the attendance," said the relieved co-founder and jazz crooner, Wil Darcangelo, while hastily taking care of final details and greeting guests. "The worst ice storm ever, the worst economy since the Great Depression, a blizzard...none of these things have stopped our volunteers and community members from coming out to support our cause."

While holding a roll of raffle tickets, one of the groups three co-founder's, David Roth, added, "In a down economy it's even more important that we walk the walk regarding what we care about. Society has had enough of businesses that don't care."

Roth is responsible for bringing the idea of "cause marketing" to the organization. Cause marketing is a way to do business that benefits all. By working together to donate time, money, and expertise to help a cause, businesses and charitable organizations make the community a better place, while also promoting themselves. Co-founder and organizer Corinne Farinelli, was also busy making sure the event went off without a hitch. She



Ginny White is joined by her grandchildren, city officials, and members of the Good-Wil Initiative, as she is awarded the Ginny White Good-Wil Service award.

PRIDE PHOTO/CHARLES STERNAIMOLO

explained why the trio got together to create such a caring organization.

"We wanted to set up something that would benefit everyone. Businesses are not just making a cash donation, but are actually involved in making this a better community. It's not just a one-way street, either, because charities have a part to play in helping local businesses," said Farinelli. Along with the charities and local businesses that Good-Wil helps, Darcangelo benefits too.

"As a singer, this is a great way to build up credibility" he said.

He is currently promoting his latest album titled, "Tuesday is the New Saturday."

The festival was the culmination of Good Wil's very first season.

To show their appreciation of her tireless effort helping the local community, Ginny White, of Ginny's Helping Hand Inc., was honored with an award from the Good-Wil group. Taking it one step further, the award (which the group plans to make annual) was named the Ginny

White Good-Wil Service Award. Along with White's supporters, as well as the many businesses and organizations represented in the audience, many local politicians were there to show their support. Presenting the award, Darcangelo was joined by Mayor Lisa Wong, Rep. Stephen DiNatale (D-Fitchburg) and Leominster Mayor Dean Mazzarella.

"[I] couldn't think of a more appropriate person to receive this award than Ginny White. I know she likes to be behind the scenes but we need to let the community know that we honor and support her hard work," said Wong.

After the ceremony, White tried to leave unnoticed so she could attend another charity event in Leominster. However she was stopped by supporters, continually approaching her to give hugs and show their appreciation.

When asked to say a few words about herself, White made it obvious that she would rather shift the attention to her many friends in the community who have aided her organization to help those in need.

She pointed out that her slogan is "A Hand Up - Not A Hand Out."

"I appreciate everyone who cares enough to make donations and volunteer their time. I couldn't do it without them," said White.

While walking out the door she said quietly, "We're all in this together."

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