

Press Release

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Fond du Lac Area United Way

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United Way Wins Big at Dance Competition

FOND DU LAC, Wis. (July 14, 2009) – Dancers in the *Nights On Broadway* “competition” Friday at the Ramada Inn quick-stepped, tangoed and fox-trotted their way to a combined contribution of approximately \$18,000 for the Fond du Lac Area United Way.

The local United Way Agency is committed to raising \$1 million in anticipation of expected record requests next year from affiliated agencies. Fond du Lac community leaders and citizens spent several weeks learning dance steps in preparation for the competition. Winners were determined by votes cast in the way of contributions. Voting was open online the week prior to the event and at the Ramada Inn during the Friday evening gala.

Also donated was a portion of the \$60-per-plate dinner fee. The event was produced by Shut Up and Dance, a ballroom dance studio in Fond du Lac.

“It was a wonderful event, and the United Way is very fortunate to benefit from all the work, efforts and generosity of so many people,” said Tina Potter, executive director of the Fond du Lac Area United Way. “The dancers – the stars of this event – worked hard to makes this special, and their practice really paid off. The room was filled with people anxious to make a difference, and the performances made it happen.”

Dan Buechel, co-owner of Partners by Design and Fine Furnishings, led the way with the most votes, followed by Pat Miller, owner of Culver restaurants in Fond du Lac and Oshkosh, and Dr. Steve Meress.

The featured event of the evening paired local celebrities with dance studio partners in choreographed routines designed for entertainment. In keeping with the evening's theme, routines were performed to popular Broadway show tunes.

Performing were:

Josh Bullock: Swing

Josh Bullock, Ph.D., is the vice president, strategic advancement, for Moraine Park Technical College, managing strategic planning, institutional research, quality improvement, accreditation, and special projects. In addition, for the past 16 years he has served as an adjunct instructor at Marian University in Fond du Lac, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in leadership, marketing and research.

Dean Jaber: Rumba

Dean Jaber was born and raised in Fond du Lac and is now raising his three daughters: Ali, 11; Ella, 6; and Reagan, 3, near the same neighborhood he grew up in. Ali and Ella attend St Mary Springs Academy and Reagan is at Camelot Children's Center. After Graduating from Marian College in 1995 with a bachelor's degree in business administration, Dean worked in Milwaukee for eight years. In 2003 he joined his brother-in-law, Kevin Twohig, and his twin brother Brian at Twohig Flooring America. Now the sales manager, Dean is involved in all aspects of the day to day operations of the business.

Dan Buechel: Tango

Dan earned a degree in Interior Design in 1983 and has 26 years of experience in the furniture industry. In May of 1997 Dan and his partner Erin Rademann established Partners by Design and Fine Furnishings in Fond du Lac, a retail store that specializes in both residential and commercial design. Dan and his wife Joan have been married for 24 years.

Dr. Steve Meress: 1980s Cha Cha

"I have been in Fond du Lac for 20 years, working initially at SAH ER for approx nine years, Aurora Health Care for several years and my own practice Fox Valley Wellness Center for 11 years. I also work at Taycheedah Correctional as a physician and Medical Director of Hospice Advantage. I have a 20-year-old daughter and two stepsons.

"My second marriage to Julie Spallas was the love of my life. I learned how to dance the "down and dirty blues" from her. That is where my desire to dance was inspired. Unfortunately, she passed away last year from breast cancer. She still is with me everyday. Her sons are still a very special part of my life, one in Colorado and one in Madison. My daughter is working in San Francisco and will attend college in the spring."

Craig Finley: Foxtrot/Broadway

Craig is originally from Eau Claire and moved to Fond du Lac in 1981. He also began working at Moraine Park Technical College in 1981. He is the Special Services Associate at MPTC and began his career as an interpreter for the deaf. He has been married to his wife, Debbie, for 29 years and they have two children. Joel is 27 is married and lives in Minneapolis; Robin, 25, lives in Fond du Lac.

Lori Thiel: Salsa

Not your stereotypical "biker chick," Lori Thiel is compassionate, caring, feminine and completely void of any tattoos! Lori's two-wheel adventures began at a very early age while racing around the family farm on dirt bikes. Growing up in the Hilbert area on her families' dairy farm instilled a deep work ethic, as the entire family pitched in working the farm each day.

Lori "tapped into her courage" and left a 20-year successful career in the financial services business, only to embark on a dream of owning her own business. Now approaching nearly three years as co-owner of Open Road Harley Davidson in Fond du Lac, her passion for motorcycling and her commitment to the business couldn't be stronger, demonstrated by the business' 2008 ranking in the top 6 percent of all Harley Davidson dealerships nationwide, based on Harley-Davidson's Bar & Shield scoring system. Lori currently serves as a Fond du Lac United Way board member.

Ellen Sorensen: Viennese Waltz

Ellen is the Director of Administration/Chief of Staff for Fond du Lac County. Prior to that she was Executive Director of the Ripon Area Chamber of Commerce. She is a graduate of Ripon College, and is the mother of two adult sons, Andrew who lives in Madison, and Justin who lives in Ripon. She is pleased to be dancing again and delighted to be a part of the United Way fundraiser.

Andrea Welsch: Swing

Andrea Welsch is Executive Director of the Children's Museum of Fond du Lac. She works with energetic volunteers, committed board members, dedicated staff and various educators to provide unique hands-on learning opportunities. She is passionate about the importance of "play" in the social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of children.

Andrea has four children: Johnny, 11; Zachary, 9; Brady, 7; and Alexandra, 2. Andrea's husband John provides support in everything she does . . . including dancing.

Pat Miller: Quickstep

Pat and her husband, Rick, own Culver's Restaurants in Fond du Lac and Oshkosh. Pat is a lifelong Fond du Lac resident. She has two grown children and two granddaughters, Maggie & Hollie (ages 3 and 1). She is a dedicated community volunteer and was excited to learn the "quickstep" with her partner and teacher Jon Snell. Pat and Culver's restaurants have been staunch supporters of the local communities and support fundraisers for many non-profit organizations, schools, etc. "Giving back" is their motto. She is a board member of United Way and Agnesian HealthCare, and is President of the Lake to Lake Chapter of the Wisconsin Restaurant Association.

Brooke Boyle: Salsa

"My name is Brooke Boyle-Treleven, I am 27 years old and an only child of Tim and Cathy Boyle. I grew up in and have lived in Fond du Lac most of my life. I graduated from Goodrich High School in 2000 and attended the University of Minnesota, and then returned to finish at the University of Wisconsin Fond du Lac.

"Since then, I have moved on to attend real estate schooling and pursue my real estate license. Having grown up watching my mom, Cathy Boyle, sell real estate for over 20 years, I knew it was something I always wanted to do. I have been listing and selling real estate for almost six years now and have found it a very rewarding career helping my clients make one of the biggest purchases of their lives! I also work full time at Roberts Homes and Real Estate as office administrator. In addition, I bartend at Schmitty's Oar House whenever I can. I have an 8-year-old daughter, Kabrea, who is also a very busy little girl.

Nan Baumgartner: Rumba

Nan is the Family Living Educator and Department Head with the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, Fond du Lac County. She is married to Tom and they have two grown children Emily and David. Emily and her husband, Aaron, made Nan and Tom grandparents in 2007. They are now enjoying a new chapter of parenting – grandparenting!

In addition to spending time with 2-year-old grandson Owen, Nan loves to scrapbook, golf, quilt, cook and get ideas from HGTV. She is also a member of Fond du Lac Morning Rotary. Nan is excited to be a part of this United Way fund raiser; being able to support the work of the organization as well as learn to dance!

The United Way

The Fond du Lac Area United Way believes that solving local issues requires people from across the community; local government, business, faith groups, non-profits, education, labor and ordinary citizens tackling them together.

To achieve this end result United Way brings together diverse people and resources to address the most pressing conditions in our Fond du Lac area communities. As such, United Way has established three overarching areas in which address and build community strength:

- Breaking cycles of generational poverty
- Supporting stability and independence
- Improving people's health and wellness

United Way is working with community partners to achieve those goals by specifically focusing on three primary objectives:

- Building Supportive Communities
- Building Healthy Communities

- Building Educated Communities

These are the building blocks for a good life and a stronger Fond du Lac area community.

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