

## Silent and Chance Auction donations top 200 for successful Winter Gala; Four Images of Excellence winners announced

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(Editor's note: the following was written by Diane Autey, North Hennepin Area Chamber member.)

This year's North Hennepin Area Chamber of Commerce Winter Gala featured well over 200 donated Silent Auction items including products, services, dining, entertainment and sporting events, plus four valuable Chance Auction grand prize drawings. The lively event was held Feb. 1 at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center.

The crowd of 225 attendees busily mulled over each Silent Auction item, placing bids and checking back regularly to make sure their bid number still topped the list for their favorites.

Attendees were treated to a delicious dinner while listening to the talented "Crimson String Quartet" from Maple Grove Senior High.



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The highlight of the formal program was the presentation of four Images of Excellence Awards.

Large Business of the Year: Channel 12

"Channel 12 continues to provide area residents of the northwest suburbs news and information about our communities, and is a great supporter of the North Hennepin Area Chamber," said Chamber President Barbara Tuccitto Warren, who announced the winner in each category.

"We felt very proud to be recognized for our work in the community and with the chamber," said Dave Kiser, programming and sales manager for Channel 12. "Channel 12 is all about serving the communities, and involvement in the chamber is an important way for us to stay involved in the area business scene and find additional ways to serve the area."

Medium Business of the Year: Let's Dish!

"Let's Dish! has been involved in the community in numerous ways including making lunches for school staff and teachers on appreciation days, assisting businesses in nutrition programs, assisting in multiple fundraisers, and helping charitable organizations. The Maple Grove store is number one in revenue in the Twin Cities," said Warren.

"Let's Dish! has always been proud to serve the community through involvement with local schools and businesses," said Kris Carver, community marketing manager for Let's Dish! "We were thrilled that the chamber recognized Let's Dish! as a positive influence on the community. Winning this award has me thinking of what else we can do to support the chamber, our customers and our community at an even greater level next year!"

Small Business of the Year: Carousel Travel

"Carousel Travel has effectively used an 'old school' style of marketing to keep customers coming. This has been achieved, in part, through unmatched community involvement. Karen Moore has continually stepped up to be a visible part of the chamber and other community events," said Warren.

"I felt truly honored and surprised to be nominated, and then shocked to learn that I had won!" said Karen Moore, owner of

Carousel Travel (now Vanguard Travel). "My active involvement in the chamber is important because it helps me grow my business through networking, visibility and exposure on the various committees, as well as giving back to the community at large."

Service to the Chamber Award: Lynn Kleve

"Lynn capped off a three-year run as the Golf Committee Chair with an outstanding event this past year. She has grown the event into a well-oiled machine that will easily be turned over to a new chair. Lynn also did an outstanding job leading the selection committee for the new chamber president," said Warren.

"I felt honored to be nominated by my peers in the chamber," said Lynn Kleve of QBF - Solutions Beyond Print. "Winning such an award is very humbling and gratifying. My involvement in the chamber has been extremely rewarding from a personal standpoint, and also a benefit to my business. The relationships I have developed over the past five years have enabled me to grow as a person, learn more about our community, and form new business relationships with other chamber members."

The North Hennepin Area Chamber of Commerce serves the cities of Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Maple Grove and Osseo. The Chamber invites all business people in these communities to become active members. For more information contact the Chamber office at 424-6744 or its Web site at [www.nhachamber.com](http://www.nhachamber.com).

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