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Pine Tree Potters and local restaurants ladle their way past $100,000



By Brock Weir

Hungry patrons were bowled over by dozens of delicious homemade soups on Thursday as hundreds descended throughout the day to sample the best of what local restaurants ? and the local Pine Tree Potters Guild ? had to offer.

In the process, they raised over $19,000 to be shared between Aurora's Welcoming Arms, which provides assistance to disadvantaged local residents, as well as Newmarket's Inn From The Cold, which provides opportunities for local homeless.

While $19,000 is impressive on its own, what makes this year stand above the others is this total helped push them over the top: over the last seven years, the Pine Tree Potters have now raised a staggering $114,000 for local charities.

?This is our seventh annual event and we sell out every single year,? says Guild member, and Aurora resident, Jacqueline Adamek, who chaired this year's Empty Bowls event for the very first time. ?Empty Bowls events are held throughout North America and they have been highly successful.?

Empty Bowls events are organized by pottery and ceramics guilds across North America, the Pine Tree Potters being one example. Guilds create hundreds of unique bowls (Pine Tree Potters crafted over 470 bowls for this year's event alone), into which are ladled a variety of equally unique soups from local chefs and popular restaurants.

Held once again this year at the Aurora Cultural Centre, in conjunction with the Pine Tree Potters annual Holiday Sale, which ran Thursday through Sunday, they held two lunch sittings and a dinner service. Participating restaurants, chefs, and stores included Bijoy's Restaurant with Yam Avocado soup, King Richard's English Pub with Butternut Squash, King's Riding Golf Course with their chef's special, Hungry Brew Hops with Malaysian Chicken Soup, Aw, Shucks! with clam chowder, Food In Motion with Duck Broth with Rice Noodles and Duck Confit with Sprouts, Fishbone Kitchen and Bar with Roasted Sweet Potato and Ginger, Chuck's Roadhouse with Tomato and Tortellini, Sobey's with Raspberry Cheesecake Dessert Soup, Joia with Minestrone, Aqua Grill with Heirloom Tomato Puree, Michael-Angelo's with Potato Leek, and Le Brehandaise with Mint Pea Veloute, all accompanied by bread from Hurst Bakery and Nature's Emporium.

?We have a wonderful relationship with the Aurora Cultural Centre,? says Ms. Adamek. ?It is a very special space. We like to support the Aurora Cultural Centre as well. This facility is just a wonderful host.?