

## Hoedown volunteers recognized



By Alison Collins-Mrakas

From its humble beginnings as a backyard BBQ fundraiser 27 years ago to today's multi day music event, the Magna Hoedown has become a well-loved institution, not only in its home community of Aurora but in the GTA itself.

It attracts thousands of people every year ? to enjoy the music, the food and the ?foot stompin? fun.

As one can well imagine, an event of that size needs an army of dedicated volunteers to make it a success ? and Magna Hoedown has them by the hundreds. From set up to tear down, the Hoedown is never short of folks willing to donate their time and effort to help make the event a spectacular success year after year, and Magna makes sure that every volunteer knows how much that effort is appreciated.

Magna held its volunteer appreciation and Hoedown recipient thank you event this month at the York Regional Police Association in Newmarket. It was a night to say thanks to the sponsors, volunteers and the core team that make everything happen at the Hoedown.

Attending the event were representatives of the 15 charities, sports, arts and community groups that are this year's recipients of the Hoedown proceeds. Each of the 15 groups received a cheque for \$30,000, a sizeable sum that will help deliver the support these groups provide to so many people in our community.

Also in attendance were many of the volunteer leads; these are the hardworking folks that work the event into the wee hours, overseeing hundreds of volunteers tasked with keeping the event humming. These ?blue shirts? were singled out for their tireless dedication and hard work.

As regular Hoedown-goers know, a key feature of the Magna Hoedown is, of course, the Hoedown Showdown where local musicians get their shot at showcasing their talents in the hopes of winning the grand prize worth over \$15,000 ? and the opportunity to perform a set before the thousands of folks attending the Hoedown.

Attendees at the volunteer appreciation event were treated to a three-song set by the winner of this Year's Showdown, Sarah Macrae. Ms. Macrae played 3 original songs to a very appreciative crowd.