

Record-breaking amount raised at CDS Auction



By **Kim Sillcox**

On May 29th, the stars were aligned and came out in force to attend The Country Day School's 42nd Annual Auction. The CDS Dome in King was transformed with glamour and bright lights into all that is Hollywood!

We are thrilled to announce that the Hooray for Hollywood Auction sold out three weeks in advance and yielded a record breaking \$616,000. The actual breakdown is \$241,000 net for auction and \$375,000 of new pledges toward the \$10 million Making Connections campaign.

What many in the local community may not know is that in the early years of the CDS Auction, it was thought of as "The Best Annual Event in King." In fact, The Country Day School was the first independent school in Canada to host a large-scale fundraising auction and over the years has shown others how successful and fun they can be.

The first CDS Dinner & Silent Auction was held on May 30, 1974 at Eaton Hall on what is now Seneca College's King Campus two years after the School's founding. It was organized by original CDS parents with a goal to raise \$3,500. It reportedly raised \$6,500.

During those first years, the auction committee approached local business owners for everything from the food (Gallagher's Food Market of Oak Ridges) and rentals (Stevenson's Rentals), to the flowers (handpicked) and live band (Adam Saunders and the Hammered Brass - Adam was a friend of many CDS parents and still resides in King City). Long time King resident and original CDS parent, the late Dinny Day, hosted the Auction for the next eight years, and then her brother, Michael Burns, and his wife Sue took over the hosting responsibility in their indoor riding arena until the 25th Auction in 1997. The original auctioneer, Noel Robertson, donated his services and stayed on until 1988.

Every year the Auction Committee aimed higher, fueled by the success of their most recent event. After the first Auction, the event opted for both a Live and Silent Auction format, with donations ranging from antique fire engines, cars, furniture, cottage vacations, balloon rides, riding lessons from Olympian Equestrian and CDS parent Jimmy Elder, and hilarious themed-dinner parties for large groups. Other memorable items included first line starting rights in a CDS NHL Old-timers Game at Maple Leaf Gardens, parrots and Labrador Retriever puppies.

While the CDS Auction has evolved over the years, it still bears similarities to the past. In particular, it does a wonderful job at showcasing the School's sense of community and philanthropic spirit. As the largest fundraiser of the year, this event is something current families and alumni look forward to, and it is a point of pride among the organizers to see this spectacular event continue to build upon prior year's successes.