

TOWN TALK

GALLERY GALA BENEFITS HOSPITAL JUST UP THE HILL

Look up! Look waaaaay up! Polygon partiers focus their fete on Lions Gate



MALCOLM PARRY

HOSPITAL AID: It's hard to beat the cross-harbour view from the Polygon Gallery at the foot of North Vancouver's Lonsdale Avenue.

But those who gathered there recently were figuratively looking the other way and 15 blocks up the hill to Lions Gate Hospital. Chaired by Farah Sayani, a 19th-annual event reportedly netted close to \$1.2 million to support new technology services at a hospital that recently completed a \$100-million medical and surgical campaign. Ian Telfer and wife Nancy Burke represented the event's published title sponsor, Goldcorp Inc., which was acquired by Newmont Mining Corp. recently to become Newmont Goldcorp. Perhaps relieved by events, Goldcorp chair Telfer looked a decade younger, as Burke always does.

TOASTING SISTERS: It takes chutzpah to stage alcohol-themed events in high-performance car showrooms. But Cheryl Nakamoto and Cam and Sarah McNeill's Grape Juice wine tasting and auction in Asgar Verji's Weissach Porsche showroom reportedly added \$84,000 to a 12-year total nearing \$900,000. This recent sum will elevate 42 girls from Big Sisters of Lower Mainland's 137 wait-list, said executive director Hanne Madsen. She's also pleased to launch Big Sisters' Career Camp program for 36 girls in grades 10 to 12 to spend an overnight July weekend readying for university at her Simon Fraser alma mater. Madsen, meanwhile, fancied a 1963 Porsche 356 coupe that would have cost her \$100,000-plus.

TOUGH TIMES REVISITED: Williams Lake sisters Jeeti, Kira and Salakshan Poonin's childhood years of sexual abuse are a quarter-century behind them. Now residing in Vancouver, they had the courage to recount youthful anguish, along with challenges to the legal system and non-protecting parents, in director Baljit Sangra's 85-minute movie *Because We Are Girls*. Encouraging other women to not stay silent about abuse, it opened the recent DOXA Documentary Film Festival in Vancouver as part of the Justice Forum series.

CHOCOS AWAY: Caren McSherry's Hastings-off-Clark Gourmet Warehouse filled up recently with folks munching on chocolate in order to help children who seldom get that chance. That was when Firefighter of the Year Justin Mulcahy and Vancouver Firefighter Charities executive director James Docherty staged a contest between seven chocolatiers ranging from Christopher Bonzon to Thomas Haas. Mentored by Daniel Capadouca, Okanagan College's Jalayne Jones won, and the event reportedly raised \$21,000 for Snacks For Kids, Project Chef and the Strathcona Community Centre Backpack Program.

LIONS' PRIDE: The Vancouver Chinatown Lions Club celebrated its 65th anniversary at Keefer Street's Floata restaurant recently. Close to 700 banquetters, including club president David Mao and event committee and three-time Lion of the Year chair Syrus Lee, saw non-member Richard K. Wong receive the organization's Medal of Merit. Hong Kong-born former banker Wong was cited for "promoting intrinsic Canadian ideals of diversity, harmony and inclusion." He continues to be involved in dozens of community and charitable endeavours. Wife Grace is feted for public service, too, not



Linda Poole, who stages the Cherry Blossom Festival's Sakura Night, always counts on friend Daphne Crocetti to fly in from Switzerland.



Big Sisters of Lower Mainland's Hanne Madsen figured a \$100,000-range 1963 Porsche 356 coupe would be an engaging alternative to her Honda Odyssey.

least as the S.U.C.C.E.S.S. community service agency's former chair. The Wongs also attended the club's flag-raising ceremony on a newly installed pole in the adjacent Memorial Square. Possibly more delighted was 97-year-old former master warrant officer George Chow, who fought with Canadian troops at the June 6, 1944 Normandy landing and the liberation of Holland. His many medals include the French Legion of Honour. Still, Victoria-born Chow's long ambition was to see the Canadian flag fly over Vancouver's Chinatown. Objective realized.

TRUTH TO TELL: Chinatown Lions Club board member and accounting firm principal Hebron Shyng expressed an amusing but pertinent opinion of the Canadian Revenue Agency: "I'd like to thank the CRA, without whose incomprehensible regulations I wouldn't have a job."

SLOW SPEEDSTERS: Most of the 250 police-escorted cars nose-to-tailing to Whistler in the recent Diamond Rally would have cost well over \$100,000. Still, along with Luxury and Supercar Weekend and other related events, the rally has been money in the bank for Craig Stowe and Nadia Iadisernia. With collector-enthusiast Robbie Dixon, they have enjoined owners of cars that can exceed posted speeds three times over to putter along rural black-top and benefit various charities.

CHERRY CHEERY: Linda Poole celebrated another Cherry Blossom Festival by staging Sakura Night in the Stanley Park Pavilion. Seven restaurants, from Benkei Ramen to Zen, served Japanese-themed cuisine, and five beer and wine purveyors helped attendees wash it down. Among the latter, Stanley Park Brewing general manager Doug Devlin said that the firm's long-gestating restaurant-brew pub should open in the park's 2016-closed Fish House premises by mid-June. The 260-seat restaurant will be managed by Andre Bourque and Ryan Moreno's Surrey-based Joseph Richard Group as the first Vancouver operation in their Richmond-to-Chilliwack chain. **DOWN PARRYSOPE:** While Queen Victoria might finally be amused to have a great-great-great-great-grandson named Archie, his great-grandma, Queen Elizabeth, would doubtless be a Betty. malcolmparry@shaw.ca 604-929-8456



Farah Sayani chaired, and Lions Gate Hospital Foundation chair Pierre Lebel aided a gala at the North Vancouver waterfront Polygon Gallery that reportedly netted \$1.2 million for the hospital. PHOTOS: MALCOLM PARRY



Cam McNeill, Cheryl Nakamoto and Sarah McNeill's Grape Juice event reportedly benefited Big Sisters of Lower Mainland to the tune of \$84,000.



Jeeti, Salakshan and Kira Poonin back Baljit Sangra, whose *Because We Are Girls* documentary revealed their childhood sexual abuse.



Dotty Kanke and Caren McSherry tempt firefighter Justin Mulcahy at the Chocolate Challenge event to benefit children.



Consul General of China Tong Xiaoling congratulated George Chow, 97, who fought at the 1944 Normandy landings and Holland's liberation.



Diamond Rally organizers Craig Stowe and Nadia Iadisernia saw this Mercedes-Benz and 250 other exotics rev up for a Whistler round trip.



Former S.U.C.C.E.S.S. service agency chair Nancy Burke saw the Chinatown Lions Club honour husband Richard's community works.



Nancy Burke and Goldcorp chair Ian Telfer represented the previously sold firm as the Lions Gate Hospital Foundation gala's title sponsor.



At a Cherry Blossom and Doug Devlin said Stanley Park Brewing's brew-pub reopening of the Fish House is nigh.