

Guys & Dolls will date for dollars



It's your chance to buy a dream date with one of Mississauga's 14 most eligible bachelors or bachelorettes (see above, who gathered at the Airport Marriott hotel recently) and it's all for a good cause. On Thursday Feb. 5th, the doors of the Mississauga Convention Centre open at 6:30 pm for the Guys & Dolls Charity Auction. For \$25 you get in the door and that gives you two drinks, starters and a \$25 voucher. Enjoy the evening with friends until the bidding starts. All proceeds go to Credit Valley Hospital Pediatric Oncology unit. For tickets and info call 416-522-0499 or email diannesm@sympatico.ca.

Photo by Stephen Uhraney

Arts & culture are essential to define a city

Cont. from page 25

- that Mississauga's built environment is seen as the "epitome of the cookie cutter suburban model", and that many City By-Laws unintentionally act as a barrier to cultural events, venues, and the creative use of public space, and that Mississauga needs a Public Art Policy
- that the City should establish partnerships with key sectors that have important contributions to make in supporting arts, culture, and heritage activity – for example, by creating a central pool for sponsorship
- that Mississauga has a strong base of arts, culture and heritage organizations that should be supported and strengthened, and that it needs ways to increase the exposure of its' cultural activity.

A valuable new portal for arts and culture called Blogsauga has already been launched. But that's only a starting point.

"We want to get the message out to all residents, that the groups are here, we have some wonderful festivals. To provide internal tourism, if you will," Burt says.

She feels the Arts and Culture Master Plan, "will not be a sit-on-the-shelf document."

"I think the fact that after the Mayor's Arts Review Task Force [in 2005], the City moved forward with the creation of the Office of Arts and Culture, and the fact we've moved forward with additional funding for Arts and Culture shows the importance City Council puts on the arts," she says.

In late fall of '08, Council approved a staff report recommending: that per capita funding for arts, culture and heritage double over the next four years, from \$1.50 to \$3 per household; that \$80,000 be allocated to the revised Technical Assistance Grant Program to support smaller arts and culture groups; and the creation of a Mississauga Arts Stabilization Fund (and provision of a \$300,000 one-time payment to get started).

"There is a need for a long-term strategy for the Arts in Mississauga that will address funding, promotion, and inclusion of arts and culture in city planning," Mayor Hazel McCallion declared. "We know that successful and profitable municipalities around the world have strong cultural communities at their core, that create international appeal and contribute to economic success."

Burt observes that more recently, "all of City Council is expanding their knowledge and commitment to the arts."

"I really do see that as a result of the Mayor's Arts Review Task Force, the way she did it with key business people out in the community -- like former General Electric CEO Bob Gillespie was chair. I thought that was the turning point," she says.

The development of the Arts and Culture Master Plan is running "almost" parallel" to the new Strategic Plan, and the City's Official Plan is also being revised.

"We've worked very closely with them, the director of arts and culture is part of the Strategic Advisory Committee," she relates. "There's some really nice synergies here. We're trying really hard to ensure there's that cross-pollination."

She acknowledges there's a balance to be struck between public input and fiscal responsibility.

"We've had a lot of public input, but our consultant hired three other sub-consultants, and they're doing background research for us," she says. "For example, postal code research. That will plot where these

subscribers, and people come from in the city [to various cultural events]. Now we have some hard data."

"It's going to take some time to solve some of the issues, and bring about a positive resolution. The Master Plan is important to

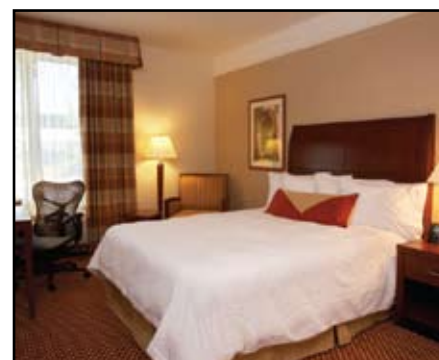
us all. Where do we start? The Master Plan will say, "Here's where we need to start."

However, more than one participant at the Public Arts Workshop cited the need to turn things around ASAP.

"I think there is an urgency," she adds. "I

think among people involved with Arts and Culture for the past 25 years in Mississauga, there are some who want to see action now, and we understand that."

"[But] we can't do it all at once. We will have to prioritize."



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