

# Crowd enthusiastic at school foundation gala in Southington

**Richie Rathsack | Posted: Saturday, October 29, 2011 6:00 am**

SOUTHINGTON - Fans showed their support all evening as the Southington Education Foundation raised money during its annual Fan of the Foundation Gala.

To kick off the evening, the Southington Brass, a group made up mainly of students and educators, performed for guests arriving at the Aqua Turf Club Friday night. The group wowed the crowd with some traditional brass classics as well as Halloween treats such as the "Ghostbusters" song.

"I'd like to thank all of you. The work of the Southington Education Foundation would not be possible without your support," said Bill Lutz, foundation president. While waiting for dinner, education fans browsed through the wide array of items in a silent auction. Pieces of art created by students in the school system were particularly hot items.

"These are the best," Patty Boissonneault said as she placed her bid on one of the artworks. "They do such a great job."

Her daughter is out of the school system, but she said it's important to continue supporting local education .

Southington Library Director Sue Smayda was happy to win the bidding on two horse pictures drawn by students. She had been eyeing them all night and said they would be perfect together in the library.

Foundation Vice President Dawn Miceli walked through the crowd encouraging people to open their wallets. The Community Foundation of Greater New Britain posed a challenge to the education foundation , saying that if the group could raise at least \$5,000 more than the \$30,000 it raised last year, the community foundation would donate \$5,000.

"I think we'll do it," Miceli said as she walked through the crowd of nearly 300 people. "It's overwhelming to see all the support. It's rewarding to see that people value what we are trying to do here."

Several school system employees browsed through the auction, bidding on their favorites. Plantsville School Principal Patricia Corvello walked with South End School Principal Sally Kamerbeek as they kept a close eye on their items. "We're going to win them all," Corvello said.

Language arts coordinator Betsy Chester said seeing the community come out to support the work of educators is incredible.

"It's really the model community- school partnership," Chester said. "Teachers in Southington take a lot of pride in their work and the community takes a lot of pride in their schools. It's contagious."

The educators also like to have a lot of fun. As dinner finished and a DJ began to play music, a table of principals was the first to get the dancing portion of the night started, with an enthusiastic rendition of "Sweet Caroline" by Neil Diamond.