

## **Spirit Feast '07 a Great Community Celebration**

Something special was happening on Christmas Eve past. It was quiet on Gabriola Island. Not many cars on the road, or people walking on the beaches or the general hustle and bustle one usually sees in urban areas on this last day. There was however a beehive of activity at Camp Miriam. PHC volunteers were stringing lights, decorating a Christmas tree, hanging colorful seasonal characters and flowers around the huge dining room. The wooden dining tables were transformed with festive table cloths and beautiful centre pieces of pine and cedar and candles and Teddy Bears. The kitchen was warm in temperature and warm in heart as cooks prepared six turkeys, and many pounds of vegetables were cleaned and set ready.

All this in preparation for PHC's Annual Spirit Feast on Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. What a wonderful feast it was! Author, Neil Aitken and his wife arrived with a box full of his book "Island Time: Gabriola 1874-1879" to give to each and every adult. The children were given the Teddy Bears (donated from the Liquor Store) from the centre pieces and wooden cars and toy bags. Two tickets to the variety show "We Can Do It", courtesy of Gabriola Gourmet Garlic, were given out, through a circle of fun and the spinning of Billy to point out the winner. After dinner, musicians and singers gathered around the piano to produce wonderful festive music. A good time was had by all.

The Spirit Feast could not have happened without the joyous help of the volunteers and great generosity of Gabriolans.

Appreciation to Dona Bradley who coordinated the volunteers, cooked, organized, shopped, tracked donations, picked up donations, organized rides and so many other details. Thanks to the cooking crew, Raven, Steve, Jean, Edie, Susan, Keya; the kitchen crew of David, Doug, Eric, Sophie, Lynne and Denis (a Herculean effort of washing dishes!); serving crew of Gill, Sue, Valerie, Joyce and Dave; set-up and decorating crew of Eric, Joanne and family, David, Doug; the greeting crew of Jane, Deborah; take-down crew of Eric, Barbara, Frank. Thanks to the guests who stayed to help afterwards too!!

Without the donations this day would not have happened so great. Thanks to: Village Foods, Thrifty Foods, the United Church, Gabriola

Coffee, Leslie McMahon, Wild Rose Garden Centre, GIRO, Kathy Fretheim, Suzy's Restaurant, and Camp Miriam.

Cash donations helped too and thanks to: Bernie Simpson and the Lion's Club.

The hundred or so people who attended the feast went home with boxes of left overs and promises of returning next year. Those who missed it said they won't miss it next year!!

Thanks everyone and all the very best for this new year!!

Barbara Saunders  
Executive Director  
PHC