

Boat does double duty as charity prize

An unusual kind of raffle ticket went on sale at the Fourth Annual Hope at the Point Foundation fundraising benefit last October.

The grand prize couldn't be raffled off until enough tickets had been sold, so it wasn't until May that the winning ticket was drawn.

250 tickets were sold at \$100 each, which allows Hope at the Point to help charities including SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now), Hospice of Iredell County, My Sister's House, Mooresville Christian Mission and Lake Norman Volunteer Fire Department.

So what was worth \$100 per ticket? A new 2007 Chaparral 180 SSI, donated by Chaparral and The Boat Rack in Sherrills Ford, valued at \$25,000.



Jeannette Astourian

"We support the Hope at the Point Foundation and the charities that they contribute to," said David Lowman, owner of The Boat Rack. "We contacted Jim Lane, President of Chaparral, and he came on board with us 50-50 to donate the boat to the raffle."

The boat included a Road King Trailer provided by The Boat Rack. An interesting side note: The Boat Rack is the largest single-location Chaparral dealer in the world out of 146 domestic and 65 international dealerships.



COURTESY OF JOHN GROSSMAN

David Lowman (from left) of The Boat Rack; Beth Morang, an owner of The Family RV Center; and Jack Grossman, fundraising chairman for Dove House Children's Advocacy Center, with the Chaparral 180 SSI that The Family RV Center is donating for auction.

"It's funny that when we receive attention at the major boat shows, other dealers scratch their heads wondering where Sherrills Ford is located," said Lowman "and how in the world can it beat out markets like Miami?"

It would already be a nice story if it ended there, but it gets better.

While trying to track down the lucky ticket holder, I spoke with Stephen Henry of The Boat Rack, who told me that the winner of the boat was actually a company, The Family RV Center of Statesville, a dealer of motor coaches and campers.

Chuck Schwartz, one of the owners of The Family RV Center said they were ecstatic to learn that they had won.

"It didn't take us long to decide what we were going to do with the boat," he said.

The family-owned business decided to donate the boat to Dove House Children's Advocacy Center, which will auction it to raise funds.

"We heard about Dove House a couple of years ago, and have been involved as corporate donors ever since," said Schwartz. "They are an unbelievable group that works with one of the most difficult situations anyone could

imagine."

Founded in 2002, Dove House helps children who are victims of sexual abuse by providing a safe, home-like atmosphere for those who previously would have to visit police, hospitals, attorneys, child protective services and various other locations in order to report crimes. Complete descriptions of the services are on its Web site: www.dovehouse.us.

Meanwhile, Hope at the Point Foundation will hold its fifth annual event on Oct. 6 with a Halloween Ball, and on Oct. 8 with its Scramble for Hope Golf event. As always, the funds raised will benefit local charities.

Dove House will feature the boat in its live auction to be held at the Seventh Annual "An Evening for Dove House" event on April 26, 2008, in Mooresville.

Jack Grossman, who is the Fundraising Chairman for Dove House, said that some of the auction items in the recent past include a bass guitar autographed by Paul McCartney, and two Les Paul guitars signed by members of The Rolling Stones. A helmet from Jeff Gordon was auctioned off, and the owners donated it back to be auctioned again that night. Clearly, this is a cause that people want to support.

Jeannette Astourian lives in Mooresville. If you have a story to share, e-mail: jastourian@charlotteobserver.com.

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