

SWEETHEART BALL

Bernard Merrill

St. Helens Arts and Cultural Commissioner

The St. Helens Arts and Cultural Commission held its Sweetheart's Ball fundraiser on Saturday, February 9th, in the Pythian Ballroom, in Old Town St. Helens.

Charged with raising funds to complete the Gateway Project, an art installation slated for installation in 2014, the Ball was a success, said committee chairman Kannikar Petersen. "We were shooting to raise \$8,000-\$10,000 after expenses and we raised \$8,500." Combined with the \$26,000 already held in trust for the project, we have raised well over half of the funds needed."

The Sweetheart Ball was truly a sweet success, combining all the best that the St. Helens community has to offer – local art work, a cadre of community volunteers, local art patrons, and perhaps most importantly, significant contributions from local businesses.

Local supporters turned out to eat and dance the night away to the Jenny Finn Orchestra, with catering by the outstanding Blackbird Catering and supported by local food suppliers from Captured by Porches Brewery to Houlton Bakery and Bertucci's.

"We couldn't have done it without the volunteers, who proved exceptional," said Luanne Kreutzer. "They were just fantastic, from helping patrons find their seats, to encouraging bidding to serving the meal and making the evening flow smooth and without a rush. They deserve a big hand!"

With a little over \$15,000 left to raise toward the goal of \$50,000, the commission feels that it is well on the way to garner the local public support needed to get their project built.

What about next year? Another ball? "Just wait and see" echoed Petersen who is not revealing what lies ahead towards reaching the Commission's goal.

Stay tuned!