

Sons of Italy Donates \$100,000 to Feed Infants

By John Giavedoni

If you were one of the 1,300 attendees at this year's Sons of Italy Gala, you were part of a magical evening! Not only was there great food and entertainment, but we also helped the hungry infants of Winnipeg -- in a big way!

The sold out audience and strong support from Royal Bank and other sponsors allowed Sons of Italy to give an unprecedented **\$100,000 to the Winnipeg Harvest Hunger for Hope program**. This amount will purchase enough baby formula to feed 1,600 infants for about 6 months.

David Northcott, Winnipeg Harvest Executive Director, and **Garth Buchko**, Chair of Hunger, spoke about all the children this huge donation would feed and the wonderful generosity shown by the Sons of Italy.

There was also a **\$10,000 donation to the Dante Alighieri Cultural Society**, an organization that teaches Italian language in Winnipeg. **Joe Leuzzi**, President of the Dante Alighieri, graciously accepted the cheque.

Sons of Italy also donated **\$10,000 to the University of Winnipeg Opportunity Fund**. With a matching donation by SOI member and U of W alumnus **Joe Bova**, the donation totaled \$20,000. **Bill Balan**, of the University of Winnipeg accepted the cheque.

The 1,300 in attendance enjoyed a mouthwatering antipasto / salad plate followed by pasta stuffed with ricotta cheese and spinach. The main course of tender roasted filet of beef tenderloin and a breast of chicken with chipotle marsala sauce was amazing.

The Canadian Italian Business Professional Association (CIBPA) honoured 92 CITI FM radio personality **Joe Aiello** with the Professional of the Year Award. National President, **Bob Sacco** was on hand to present Joe with the award.

The Vince Bova award, presented annually to a Sons of Italy member, was awarded to **Cosmo Racano** by **Josie Cumbo**, President of the Order of Sons of Italy of Canada.

After giving away five fantastic raffle draw prizes, worth over \$40,000, attention turned to our feature performer, **Steve Lippia**. Steve did not just sound like Frank Sinatra - he became Frank Sinatra! Steve Lippia, who lives in Las Vegas but performs across North America, called people up to the dance floor, and from that point the party was in full swing! **The Ron Paley Big Band** played until closing time, ensuring that the dance floor was packed right until the last song.

It was an amazing evening of sharing (see photos at www.sonsofitaly.ca), full of great food, fun times, singing, dancing, and most importantly an incredible opportunity for Sons of Italy with its sponsors, supporters and gala attendees to make a difference in the community!

Our 2012 Gala Co-chairs Franco Petrelli and Tom De Nard wish to thank everyone who contributed to the success and they quickly add: "We hope to see all of you there next year for our 27th Gala!"



L-R: Franco Petrelli (Gala Co-Chair), David Northcott (Winnipeg Harvest), Garth Buchko (Hunger for Hope), Rob Johnson (RBC), Kate Brenner (Winnipeg Harvest), Travis Giavedoni (SOI Treasurer), Justin Bova (SOI President, Tom De Nardi (Gala CO-Chair)

