

Hospice House will benefit from Forest Expo Auction

Donations are beginning to roll in for the Forest Expo Charity Auction, and insiders expect over \$100,000 to be raised for the Rotary Hospice House.

Forest Expo director Mike Podger says the Rotary Hospice House was a natural choice for his industry to support. "I don't know anyone who hasn't had some experience with the Hospice, either directly or through a family member or a friend," he says.

In fact, since 1987 the Rotary Hospice House has helped over 1,500 families from the Prince George who are dealing with death and bereavement. Donald Carson, the executive director for the Prince George Hospice Society, says helping families deal with death is what hospice care is about, with the goal of improving the quality of life for those who have a progressive, life-threatening illness.

Funds raised by the Forest Expo Charity Auction will go towards completing renovations of the Hospice facility, the Hospice Society's endowment funds, and specialized



Donald Carson of the hospice society accepts a painting from Ken Ferris. JOHN MCKENZIE/FREE PRESS

bereavement support.

One of the most valuable donations received so far is a bronze sculpture of two moose called, "Battle of the Titans," by B.C. artist Rick Taylor. Mr. Taylor's sculptures have recently fetched as high a price as \$80,000.

Other donations included a fishing trip from Harry Backlin, and a grey Cadillac from Darrell Hubbell Designer Goldsmiths. Mr. Hubbell says he and his partner are not only donating the car, with an estimated value of \$20,000, but they will hide an origi-

nally designed piece of jewelry inside the car.

And local artist Ken Ferris was also at the Ramada Monday, where he donated a large work done in watercolour, pencil and charcoal. He made the painting of two mountain lambs with the Hospice in mind; he donated another original work depicting loons at the last auction in 1998. Mr. Ferris says a large painting such as the one he donated usually sells for about \$4,000. "With notoriety, the prices go up!" he jokes.

But collectors of Mr. Ferris' work will find the mountain lambs unique. He worked from a photo of two lambs that charmed him in Jasper National Park. "I don't usually paint 'cute,'" he says, "but they were so bright-eyed, and everything was so interesting to them."

The auction will be held at the Forest Expo Chairman's Ball, on May 12 at the Civic Centre. For more information, call 563-8833.

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