

'Motor Cars' event raises money for United Cerebral Palsy at Phoenixville Foundry



United Cerebral Palsy of Philadelphia and Vicinity (UCP) Director of Development Pam Henshall poses with the evening's special honorees, **Tom Kline** and Stephen A. Sheridan, at UCP's 11th annual Motor Cars Under the Stars fundraising gala at the Phoenixville Foundry Friday. Photo by Virginia Lindak
By Virginia Lindak, For 21st Century Media



A vintage Coca-Cola truck on display outside the Phoenixville Foundry Friday night during United Cerebral Palsy of Philadelphia and Vicinity's 11th annual Motor Cars Under the Stars fundraising gala. Photo by Virginia Lindak
The United Cerebral Palsy Association of Philadelphia and Vicinity (UCP) held its 11th annual Motor Cars Under the

Stars event on Friday evening at the Foundry building in Phoenixville.

Antique, privately owned cars were showcased outside the venue, while inside, attendees enjoyed an elegant evening of fundraising for the UCP.

Cocktails, dinner and both live and silent auctions were among events guests enjoyed throughout the evening. There was also live music by Reverend Chris and the High Rollers. Items up for bid in the auction included various gift baskets, a flat screen television, NASCAR tickets, a week at a villa in Tuscany and much more. All items up for bid were donated for the event, and proceeds all go to UCP.

This is the first year the event has been held in Phoenixville. Pam Henshall, director of development for UCP, said they looked at the Foundry as a possibility after someone recommended it and thought it was a great facility.

“We fell in love with it instantaneously. It has the history behind it; they’ve done such a spectacular job renovating it, and it fit our event,” remarked Henshall.

“We move it every year. That’s a mystique about the event, is trying to find a different location,” she added. “We try to make it a whole package: it’s a beautiful location, it’s the automobiles and then we have the program and the auction as well.”

Henshall said the event is the biggest UCP fundraiser event of the year, and also hopes to raise awareness within the region.

UCP services people with cerebral palsy, as well as all types of disabilities, of all ages, from birth through seniors, in the Philadelphia area and surrounding counties.

“In some cases we are the best-kept secret,” Henshall said. “We really do cover the full spectrum of [disability] needs. ...We are not just cerebral palsy. Our goal is to raise awareness in addition to funding, but we also have some goals. This event could reach up to about \$350,000 on a gross level. Our sponsors are extremely supportive of what we do and they very much like this event, so it really works out well.”

Henshall said all proceeds raised go directly into the social service department of the organization, which is how UCP initially began in 1946 when six parents came together and formed the group.

“It’s the first step. When a family has a child or has a need, they go through our social service department and we fit the need,” she said. “It’s the front line. It’s actually how UCP started in the beginning, with social services.”

A highlight during the evening was the honoree recognition ceremony, which focused on two people and their efforts with UCP: Tom Kline and Stephen A. Sheridan.

“Tom Kline is an attorney downtown, and he is a huge advocate of families with disabilities,” Henshall said. “We chose him as an honoree because his commitment on a personal and professional level needed to be recognized. We are hoping he will stay involved with us because there are a lot of opportunities where we can learn from him. He’s been a great resource for us.”

Stephen A. Sheridan is the retiring UCP CEO of 40 years. Friday also marked his last day of work.

“He started a long time ago and grew the organization from a small daycare program and social services department into a full, flourishing adult day program and children program, and outreach,” noted Henshall.

Parked outside the Foundry, beautiful and rare classic cars and trucks were on display throughout the evening, all provided for the event by private owners. Among the vehicles were a 1928 Ford Vegetable truck, a 1939 Studebaker Coca-Cola truck, a 1941 Lincoln Zephyr Ambulance, a 1952 Chevrolet One Ton Panel truck and a 1958 Ford ice cream truck.

“The car owners are so generous just bringing their vehicles because they are donating their time and resources. We are so appreciative and it makes this event so unique,” said Henshall.