

Event lets you eat the soup, keep the bowl

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The Observer

The potter wheels were spinning at Lambton College's ceramics studio Thursday as local celebrities tried their hand at sculpting soup bowls for the third annual Empty Bowls fundraiser.

"I think my bowl will actually hold soup this time," said Myles Vanni, executive director of the Inn of the Good Shepherd.

About 17 celebrities took part, including Zach MacQueen and Tyler Peters of the Sarnia Sting, Lambton County Warden Jim Burns, college president Tony Hanlon and various radio personalities and police and fire representatives.

Their creations will be auctioned at the Empty Bowls soup dinner March 19 at the Lambton Inn, to raise money for the Lambton College food bank and the Inn of the Good Shepherd.

Eight local restaurants will provide for two sittings, at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. More than 300 bowls will be available, made by Sarnia-Lambton Potters Guild members and Lambton students and teachers.

Last year the event raised \$7,700, said organizer and ceramics instructor Beth Turnbull-Morrish. The goal this year is to exceed \$8,000.

The idea began in Michigan in the 1980s and has since spread internationally as a means to raise money for local organizations.

Sarnia's celebrity bowl-a-thon is a way to give people insight on the complexity of crafting bowls, Turnbull-Morrish said.

"To give it a try, have fun and meet the students," she said.

Lambton students offer guidance to aspiring potters during the hour they spend making bowls.

"This is a really great event," Vanni said.

Not only does it raise money for the Inn and college food bank, but it raises awareness that hunger is an issue, he said.

"We're certainly nowhere near where we were in the spring where we were 500 people a month more (than usual) in the food bank," he said. "We're starting to see things settle down a little bit more now."

About 100 more people are using the food bank monthly now than a year ago, he said.

Tickets for Empty Bowls are \$25. Participants choose the bowl they like and take it home afterwards.

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