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Quarry opponents will be out in force at November 11 gala evening

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Despite an eyebrow-raising cost, tickets are sold out for a gala evening aimed at heightening awareness of community opposition to the proposed St. Mary's Mountsberg quarry.

Priced at \$395 a couple or \$200 for a single, all 200 tickets sold quickly, leading organizers of the November 11 event to conclude that area residents are truly concerned about the proposal and willing to dig into their pockets to help quash it.

"The response to the gala is an indication of the depth of the resistance to St. Mary's Cement's proposed quarry," said Graham Flint, a resident of northeast Flamborough and chair of FORCE (Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment), a citizen-based advocacy group opposed to the quarry. "The fact that tickets sold out so quickly is proof that the community is concerned and is committed to stopping this application before any damage is done."

FORCE members organized the event to raise awareness of community opposition to the quarry, as well as to substantial dollars to help fund the battle that is expected to culminate at an expensive Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing.

The evening celebration, to be held at the Carlisle Golf and Country Club, has been dubbed "Friends - A Vital Force in our Community." It will feature an elaborate dinner with wine and performances by virtuoso entertainers. Canada's Three Tenors, Andrea Garofalo, Peter Marino and Mitch Seekins, will perform, as will award-winning soloist Lesley Andrew, concert pianist Ken Jones and rising young vocalist, Stephanie Anne Domingues of Oakville.

There will also be a silent auction of items and services donated by businesses and individuals living in the quarry area. Because the event is being held on Remembrance Day, a veteran will lead guests in a tribute and two minutes of silence.

Kilbride resident Diana McCabe, a member of FORCE's special events committee, said, "I couldn't be more thrilled with the response, particularly the significant numbers from the Carlisle area. St. Mary's Cement should take notice - opposition to their proposal is growing stronger every day."

Flint, too, is encouraged by the response from Carlisle. He said committee members have been looking for a way to attract interest from the community, which has many affluent residents.

FORCE, formed in June 2004, has attracted hundreds of supporters from neighbouring communities, including Carlisle, Mountsberg, Freelon, Campbellville, Kilbride and rural Milton.



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