

2024 South Grey Business Awards Event Report

Prepared by:

South Grey Chamber of Commerce



Event: 2024 South Grey Business Awards Gala

Date: Thursday, October 17th 2024

Times: 5:30pm - 9:30pm

Location: Walters Falls Inn, Walters Falls Ontario

Event Committee

Committee Chair: Margot Byers,

Committee: Monica Singh Soares. Kimberley Lewis and Darlene Lamberti

Chamber President: Karen Cox

Chamber Staff: Reuben McCallum & Nick Smith

Event Summary

The 2024 Business Awards Gala took place at Walters Falls Inn. A total of **77** plates were served by caterers at the Inn. Tickets were priced at a cost of **\$75.00+HST** for Chamber members and **\$85.00+HTS** for Non Chamber Members. Tables had eight seats in total.

Event Goals

- Operate the event with profit.
- Honour South Grey businesses for their accomplishments.
- Honour South Grey volunteers of the year for their accomplishments .
- Promote our main event sponsor and award sponsors throughout the night.
- Promote the South Grey Chamber to local businesses.
- Demonstrate community leadership and foster chamber and non chamber collaboration in celebration.

Event Elements

Photography: Jackson Sisters Photography - Southgate

Caterer: Walters Falls Inn
Bartender and Place settings were provided by Walters Falls Inn

Beverages: Wine and Cash Bar

Décor: Markdale Flowers

Awards: Hilary Breadner Graphics and Design

Award and Event Sponsorships

Business Name:	Sponsored Item:
Saugeen Economic Development Corporation	Main Event Sponsor
Roberts Farm Equipment	Agri Business Award
Grey County Business Enterprise Centre	New Business of the Year Award
South Grey Chamber of Commerce	Non-Profit Award
Life Directions Employment Supports	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award
Grey County Tourism	Tourism Excellence Award
Markdale Foodland	Business of the Year Award
Grey Highlands	Grey Highlands Volunteer of the Year
Southgate	Southgate Volunteer of the Year
Chatsworth	Chatsworth Volunteer of the Year
West Grey	West Grey Volunteer of the Year

2024 Award Winners

Award Name:	Business Winner:
Agri Business Award	Sideroad Farm
New Business of the Year Award	Grey Bruce Design Shop/Studio
Non-Profit Award	Centre Grey General Hospital Auxiliary
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Award	Markdale Flowers
Tourism Excellence Award	Flesherton Farmers Market
Business of the Year Award	Neustadt Springs Brewery
Grey Highlands Volunteer of the Year	Crystal Tyler
Southgate Volunteer of the Year	MacKenzie Campbell
Chatsworth Volunteer of the Year	Chris Evans
West Grey Volunteer of the Year	Elaine Chalmers

How the Nomination and Voting Process was Built:

Nominations Process:

- Nomination page was built on the Chamber Website
 - Nomination submissions was done online
 - Nominations were open from July 23rd 2024 to August 19th 2024
 - Nominations were then checked by board members to see if they met the criteria
 - All accepted nominations were added to an updated voting page

Voting Process:

- Voting page was separated by category and used 'Survey Sparrow' to track votes.
 - Survey Sparrow was embedded into the page and stopped people from voting twice with the same information.
 - Voting was open from September 9th to September 30th 2024.
- Voting totals were then transferred to a google sheets document
- Voting total were double checked and removed duplicate votes from the same individual/business

Marketing for Award Nominations and Voting

Marketing for Nominations:

- Social Media posts on Chamber platforms
- Social Media post in local community groups
- Chamber Chatter Newspaper
- Print Window Poster
- Chamber newsletter

Marketing for Voting:

- Social Media posts on Chamber platforms
- Social Media post in local community groups
- Chamber Chatter Newspaper
- Print Window Poster
- Chamber newsletter

Marketing for the Business Awards Event

- Social Media posts on Chamber platforms
- Social Media post in local community groups
- Chamber Chatter Newspaper
- Print Window Poster
- Chamber newsletter

Example of Social Media Post - Ticket Sales Promotion:

The image is a composite of two parts. On the left is a promotional graphic for the 'Business Excellence Awards Gala'. The text reads 'Business Excellence Awards Gala' in large gold letters, followed by 'Tickets on sale NOW!' and 'October 17th, 2024'. It features the South Grey Chamber of Commerce logo and a gold ticket graphic that says 'TICKET ADMIT ONE'. At the bottom, it says 'Presented by: Saugeen Economic Development Corporation A Community Futures Development Corporation'. On the right is a screenshot of a social media post from 'southgreychamber'. The post text says: 'Thank you to everyone who voted in this year's Business Awards! Although voting is now closed, ticket sales are open for the 2024 South Grey Business Awards Ceremony. Join us for an evening of celebration and recognition of our outstanding local businesses and volunteers at the beautiful Waters Falls Inn on October 17th. Get your tickets now at: www.southgreychamberofcommerce.ca/tickets-2024'. The post includes a link, a 'Boost post' button, and engagement icons.

Example of Social Media Post - Awards List:

The image is a composite of two parts. On the left is a promotional graphic for the '2024 South Grey Chamber of Commerce Business Awards'. The text reads '2024 South Grey Chamber of Commerce Business Awards' in gold, followed by 'West Grey Volunteer of the Year' and 'Municipality of West Grey'. It features the Saugeen Economic Development Corporation logo and the West Grey logo. On the right is a screenshot of a social media post from 'southgreychamber'. The post text says: 'Tonight, we celebrate the incredible volunteers from the four municipalities we represent: Grey Highlands, Southgate, West Grey, and Chatsworth! These dedicated individuals give their time and energy to make our communities are stronger and more vibrant. We look forward to recognize these volunteers tonight at our Business Awards Gala.' The post includes a 'Boost post' button and engagement icons.

Web Track and Social Media Analytics:

Website Visits and Engagement:

- The Awards Voting page had a total of **1,498 views** during the time it was public
 - In total there were **807 unique votes** for businesses.
- The most popular voting page was New Business of the year.
- The least popular was the diversity and inclusion award.

Speakers and Presentation:

Speakers:

- The awards presentation had several speakers. Karen Cox opened the event with opening remarks.
- Reuben was the main host during the evening stepping in for Margo.
- Rise up and Soar did a presentation and video on - 'Light it Up'
- Sponsors presented awards to winners and got to speak about the winner with provided cue cards from Nick

Slide Decks and Presentation:

- Two slide decks were prepared. The first deck promoted the chamber, sponsors and listed nominations and info about the event and was looping during the dinner and the networking time.
- The second deck had the main presentation with nominations, winners and was played during the awards presentation.

Speaker Cue Cards:

- This year speaker cue cards were prepared ahead of time . These cards were short and summarized the achievements from the winning business or volunteer. These were given to speakers ahead of the event so they could practice or modify the card. Details provided on nomination forms helped give information used for the cue cards.

Notes for a Successful 2025 Year

Considerations for 2025 include:

Tickets and Seating

- Begin sales for tickets two months prior to event with a firm close date two weeks prior to dinner as to connect with caterer in ample time
- Confirm two months prior to event regarding MOU and expectations of contributing municipalities and townships as past confusion regarding how many previously agreed upon tickets were available for the contributing municipal teams
- Ensure municipalities confirm spousal/partner attendance at minimum two weeks prior to event
- Provide complimentary tickets to volunteer of the year nominees and winners
- Phone businesses, volunteers and sponsors to confirm ticket sales and attendance. Worked very well in 2024.

Sponsorship

- Open sponsorship packages in new year for all categories (event and awards)
- Begin advertising by early spring the need of sponsoring businesses
- Include at least one ticket complimentary per sponsor with additional tickets available

Awards

- Begin nomination process early spring in order to obtain multiple nominees
- Provide further categories for recognition at Awards night such as
 - Years of service (5, 10, 15, 20 etc)
 - Individual accomplishments (expanding staff, new space, etc)
- List of previous winners through the years on a handout.

General

- Confirm two weeks prior with award sponsors who will be presenting and provide that attending individual information that a speech will be provided prior to their designated award
- Provide speakers a schedule of the evening prior to event
- All contact run through staff of Chamber to maintain connection and collaborations with outside agency
- Silent Auction items announced prior to closure of ticket sales for advertising and promotional material