



Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Hamilton, ON- **The Scoop on the Soup at Soupfest VIII**

Living Rock started their 25th anniversary year with a bang with Soupfest VIII at Hamilton Convention Centre. It has been a week since Soupfest, and we are tallying results of an amazing day of “stirring up support for youth-at-risk.” Our title sponsor, FirstOntario Credit Union, helped make Soupfest a great success.

Leading up to Soupfest, FirstOntario staff dropped in to upgrade and paint critical rooms at the Rock Resource Centre and also collected hygiene products at their Hamilton and Burlington branches for street-involved youth. “We are overwhelmed with the level of support given by FirstOntario Credit Union, Hooper Law (Platinum Sponsor) and participating restaurants for making this event such a success. The community response was incredible.” said Alan Craig, Executive Director of Living Rock Ministries.

To kick off the official opening of Winterfest, FirstOntario Credit Union’s President and C.E.O., Kelly McGiffin and Chief of Police, Chief Glenn De Caire beat Mayor Fred Eisenberger and Living Rock’s Executive Director, Alan Craig, in the traditional Winterfest Log Cutting Contest. A giant, FirstOntario branded spoon was carried into Hamilton Convention Centre by a VIP delegation during the opening ceremonies to launch Soupfest’s ‘Souper Contest’, which pitted soups from over 20 restaurants against one another to win the coveted “Best Soup” award. All activities and soup tasting stopped when Country Music Television award winner, Phill Botting, sang the National Anthem. The Phill Botting Band also performed in concert at Hamilton Place the evening of Soupfest, with partial proceeds going towards supporting Living Rock.

This year’s event drew over 4,850 people from Hamilton and surrounding areas. Soupfest VIII raised the most money to date and will support youth programs to the tune of \$68,000. “The success of this year’s Soupfest is a testament to the caring and generosity of the Hamilton community,” said Dave Schurman, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of FirstOntario. “We sponsored Living Rock’s Soupfest to rally much-needed support for street-involved youth and the Hamilton community certainly stepped up to the plate, or bowl in this case”. “In light of the recent events in Haiti and the economic downturn, we are amazed at these figures and are truly blessed.” said Alan Craig. “We couldn’t have done this without the support of everyone behind us.”

Restaurant award winners are as follows:

Best Display

- 1st Place: Hamilton Convention Centre with a “King Tut” Egyptian Theme
- 2nd Place: Thirsty Cactus
- 3rd Place: Collins Brew House

Most Creative Soup

- 1st Place: The Thirsty Cactus - Alligator & Agave Corn Chowder
- 2nd Place: The Twisted Lemon - Ground Hog Chowder
- 3rd Place: Jack Astor's Ancaster- Roasted Pear with Ice wine and Brie with Crispy Shallots

Best Soup

- 1st Place: Jack Astor's Ancaster - Roasted Pear with Ice wine and Brie with Crispy Shallots
- 2nd Place: The Twisted Lemon - Ground Hog Chowder
- 3rd Place: The Vicar's Vice - Buffalo Chicken Wing

FirstOntario also hosted an “Art Park” with Living Rock youth who created artwork to the theme of “Taking Stock of What the Soup Does”. Prizes included registration to art courses at Mohawk College and the Print Studio. This year’s winners were:

- 1st Place: Chrystal for her visual art symbolizing of her journey with Living Rock
- 2nd Place: Poffty for her duct tape pieces depicting life around Living Rock
- 3rd Place: Lime for his pencil crayon on paper showing the support of Living Rock

A very special thank you to our 3 Art Park judges, 20 entertainers, 22 sponsors, 24 restaurants, 65 celebrity servers, 165 volunteers, media covering our event and all those who made Soupfest an overwhelming success.

Living Rock offers youth-at-risk a place of belonging, safety, and a bridge to the community, while supporting youth to develop a personal vision for their lives. Living Rock is located in downtown Hamilton at 30 Wilson St. (at Hughson). Visit LivingRock.ca for more details.

In business since 1939, FirstOntario Credit Union serves over 71,000 Members and offers a full suite of banking products including daily banking, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario has over \$2.2 billion in funds under management and currently has 17 branches serving 11 communities within the Hamilton, Halton, Niagara and Haldimand/Norfolk regions. Membership is open to anyone living in Ontario.

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