

Working for a safer community

BY MARK TAYTI
TRIBUNE STAFF
WELLAND

Community leaders turned out in numbers Tuesday to support the Welland Safe Community Partnership's Corporate Launch.

Their strong presence signaled an ongoing commitment for a safety initiative aimed at making the Rose City a better place to live, work and play.

The gathering at Club Richelieu was an opportunity for the steering committee to thank all the businesses and corporate sponsors who have stepped up to lend their support to a community-wide partnership that is aimed at reducing injuries in the workplace and on the home front.

Tanya Drake, of Convergys, said corporate citizenship is a core value of the company.

"This is a great way to support the community and to show our support for work place safety," she added.

Police chief Wendy Southall said she would like to see other municipalities in the region follow Welland's lead.

"This is an absolutely wonderful initiative," she said. "We are thrilled to join in this partnership."

Southall said the Niagara Regional Police Service is "better at solving all safety issues when it has the support of the community."

Ward 1 Coun. Pat Chioocchio, who is chair of the Welland Safe Community Partnership, recognized the important role that Welland's corporate leaders have in keeping the community safe. Safety must be a consideration in "all things we do, where ever we are," he said.

Chioocchio announced a "community launch" scheduled for Sunday at the Niagara Region Children's Safety Village.

The launch gets underway at 11 a.m. and runs until 3 p.m.

"We have lots of fun planned for the kids," he said.

Tuesday's corporate launch included a visit from Paul Kells, founder of the Safe Communities Foundation. He was on hand to present a \$6,000 cheque for injury reduction programs.

He also presented a "key to safety" to a class of Grade 2 students from St. Kevin school.

Kells founded the Safe Communities Partnership after his son, Sean, was killed in a preventable workplace accident at age 19.

Since its inception in 1996, 48 communities have signed on as foundation members. Welland is the first municipality in the Niagara region to establish a Safe Community Partnership.

Kells was impressed by the level of support the safety partnership is receiving in Welland.



STAFF PHOTOS MARK TAYTI

Above, Paul Kells, founder of the Safe Communities Foundation, presents Jacob Marcov and Caitlin Penny with a "key to safety" as part of the Corporate launch of the Welland Safe Community Partnership at Club Richelieu Tuesday. The children accepted the key on behalf of the city. They were at the launch with Miranda Carter's Grade 2 Class from St. Kevin School. Below, the Welland Safe Community Partnership received a \$6,000 cheque from the Safe Communities Foundation during Tuesday's Corporate Launch at Club Richelieu. From the left are Welland Safe Community Partnership chair Pat Chioocchio, Frank Adamson, executive director of the Niagara Region Children's Safety Village and steering committee member; Niagara Regional Police Inspector Rick Lundy, also a member of the steering committee; Paul Kells, founder of the Safe Communities Foundation; and steering committee members Marcel Turpin, Brigitte Chikki and Karen Walsh.



"I've never seen so many members of a city council attend a launch," he said. "There is also very good corporate support in this community."

Kells said the Safe Community Partnerships have demonstrated their worth in the last nine years.

"In a year from now, there will be

people walking around this community who would otherwise not be here," he said. "This program creates a mindset of safety that is broad-reaching."

Kells said he was gratified, "not only for Sean's memory, but to see that the good people of Welland get it and understand it."

He said it is impossible to eliminate risk, but communities can take steps to reduce the risk of injury in the workplace, at home and at school.

"Knowing what I went through and knowing what Sean went through, I never want anyone else to have to go through that again."

R
S
B

F
W

o
r

F
T
M

w
F
T
M

f
o
t
h
a
r
T

d
f

h
t

P
C

T
S

o
r
p
N

t
v
a

a
s
d
t
h
l
l
c

s
t
i
n
r

i
n
e
t
m
i
n

s
t
b
e
n
s
y

a
r
s
c
S
t
a
r
J
u

F