

BOOTHBAY HARBOR ROTARY CLUB AUCTION: **1958-2006**

On July 26, 1958, the Boothbay Harbor Rotary club took over the Lobster Time, a feed on the Boothbay Common previously organized by the Boothbay Center PTA. Rotarians had decided, in December of 1957, to launch an annual auction, often called Student Aid Day in the early years, and this "Lobster Time" event seemed to be the most propitious way to start an annual auction. Rotarians were named to chair the publicity, construction on the Common, setup and cleanup, procurement of food and drink, parking, and other auction details, much as they do almost fifty years later. This combined lobster feed and auction event was a glowing success, and the net proceeds were \$896.

Newbert "Brud" Pierce, who died in 2006, was the auctioneer for many years; his last year was when he shared the auctioneer's platform with professional auctioneer, Robert L. Foster, in 1993. The club made a mistake for three years, from 1992 to 1994, when they relocated the auction for only those years, from the Common to the Railway Village, when the auction's net proceeds dipped to a low of \$2,400 in 1994. Around 1995, the club purchased a large storage trailer that has helped store auction items throughout the year.

Under Bob Foster's auctioneering expertise, the Boothbay Harbor Rotary club's net auction proceeds have soared from around \$3,000 to \$4,800 in 1995, \$9,500 in 1997, \$14,000 in 1998, and almost \$20,000 by 2000. Not only has Bob Foster led the growth in the auction profits for local and international Rotarian causes, but he has made the auction event larger and more enjoyable for the whole community, and he has not charged one cent for over 13 years of his superb service. Robert L. Foster epitomizes Rotary's motto, "service above self."

Today this annual auction event, primarily raising funds for area youth, continues under the Rotary banner and nets approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000 yearly. In 2006 the Rotary Auction will be held at its customary place, at the Boothbay Common, and on its usual date, the first Saturday in August, throughout the morning of August 5, 2006.

Any auction items, gifts, or donations that you wish to donate to the Boothbay Harbor Rotary Auction will be tax-deductible, much appreciated, and benefit the community and international charities of the Boothbay Harbor Rotary club. For pickup of any auction items, please call during the daytime at 633-6711 (Tindal and Callahan Real Estate); or during the evening at 633-0675 (Mike Thompson).

Chip Griffin, Boothbay Harbor Rotary club historian

April 8, 2006