

AROUND TOWN

Hot soup on cold day for good cause

Souper Bowl Sunday raises money for HAMMERS

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DAVIDSON — It was the perfect day for some hot, creamy soup — blistering cold and windy. The cold weather with a sprinkling of snow that didn't stick wasn't going to stop people from hitting the Chambers Building at Davidson College on Saturday, Feb. 6, for Souper Bowl.

Nancy Waldrop, management and development fellow of the Davidson Housing Coalition, estimated 400 people arrived to sample 16 soups from 10 local restaurants and listen to good music.

"We promote the event on campus and in the community and end up having a great mix," Waldrop said Saturday morning as people streamed into the building with tickets to collect their soups.

Davidson "students roll out of bed at noon and start their day with some soup," she said.

Last year, the event raised \$6,000, and Monday morning, Waldrop confirmed 2010 the event raised \$6,500 for HAMMERS, an acronym for Hands Around Mecklenburg/Mooresville Making Emergency Repairs Safely.

The HAMMERS program has been around since 2004 and the Souper Bowl for just as long. HAMMERS is an initiative of the housing coalition, partnering with Davidson College, to provide safe housing for people in Davidson, Mooresville, Huntersville and Cornelius. HAMMERS volunteers take on all kinds of emergency repairs — leaking roofs, rotting floors and porches and broken plumbing. They'll install handicap ramps, too, Margaret Martens said.

Since June 2005, HAMMERS has helped more than 250 people in 100 repair projects.

Martens, chair of the HAMMERS board, said there are income requirements for people to receive help from HAMMERS. People must own their homes, and the volunteers will not make "cosmetic repairs."

"A lot of people we serve are elderly," Martens said. HAMMERS gets most of its clients through referrals, she said. People contact them for repairs or other area nonprofit organizations tell them of homeowners in need of help.

The Souper Bowl is the biggest fundraiser of the year for HAMMERS, Martens said.

"It not only helps us financially, but it also makes the community aware of what

we do," she said.

In the dining area, people gathered with smiles and laughter, chatting over soup and the noise of bands and choirs providing entertainment. They sampled soups to determine their favorites in four categories — best chunky, best creamy, best vegetarian and most creative.

Christina Phillips, owner of Restaurant X in Davidson with her husband, Chris, said this was the fifth year that they had brought their soup.

Marcia Webster, executive director of the Davidson Housing Coalition recruited the couple. "You get to know the whole community," Phillips added.

The Phillipses donated 15 gallons of two different soups Saturday, and they also have donated daily meals to the organizations, Phillips said.

"I think it's wonderful," customer Michael Green said, as he sampled soups out of little green cups. "The music is great,



Restaurant X owner Christina Phillips, left, and her son Oliver serve customers at the Souper Bowl. Robin Buck, of Cornelius, (right) enjoyed sampling the soups.

and it's for a good cause."

Restaurants participating this year were Armin's Catering at Beaver Dam, Brickhouse Tavern, Campania Café, Toast, Restaurant X and Sabi Asian Bistro, all of Davidson; Creole House on Main and XO Restaurant and Lounge, of Cornelius; Jeffrey's, of Mooresville; and Maddi's Southern Bistro, of Huntersville.

Bird & Bear Cookie Co. provided large cookies for dessert, and BJ's Wholesale Club provided dining supplies. ☐