



ALBERTA AUTO DEALERS RALLY TO RAISE

\$260,025

FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS ALBERTA

Thursday, August 20, 2009, Edmonton, Alberta

"I am absolutely blown away that so much money can be raised in such a short time! The generosity of our industry and friends amazes me,"

exclaimed an overjoyed Doug Airey, general manager of Western Pontiac Buick GMC and chair of the 25th annual Motor Dealers' Association of Alberta (MDA) Charity Classic after announcing this year's fundraising tally that benefits Alberta's special athletes. "Because of the dedication of our members and the bigheartedness of our guests and sponsors, in the past two days, we've raised \$260,025 for Special Olympics Alberta (SOA).

"Your caring, support and generosity will allow 100 special athletes to attend the 2010 national games in London, Ontario and we expect 10-15 of those athletes to qualify to go to the world games in Greece," SOA president Carmen Wyton told the participants. "And it doesn't get any bigger than that. Your industry is the major private funder of our program and we are looking at adding two new sports in 2010 – basketball and golf. Thank you, thank you, from the bottom of our hearts."

This year was very sentimental being the event's 25th anniversary and the organizers and guests honoured the Classic's founder, Murray Koch, Koch Automotive Group, for his vision and passion for Special Olympics. In the early 80's, Murray's life was touched and blessed by two children with intellectual disabilities. His

The MDA presents Special Olympics Alberta with the windshield cheque at the 25th annual MDA Charity Classic golf tournament on August 20, 2009 at the Glendale Golf and Country Club. Left to right: MDA chair Brent Kennedy, SOA chair John Pinsent, MDA Charity Classic chair Doug Airey.

photo by Mark Whittington

relationship with their families made him aware of the benefits of SOA's programs and the positive influence it had on their lives. This led him to serve on SOA's board and to see first hand the need for continued funding. He approached the MDA board to rally together to fundraise in a unique way for this worthwhile cause. The MDA and its member dealers supported him wholeheartedly and the rest is a wonderful history.

The Charity Classic is the culmination of months of planning and hundreds of volunteer hours by association members and staff. Since its inception, the MDA Charity Classic has raised nearly \$4.5 million for SOA. For the first 18 years, the event was held in Red Deer, and then the next six in Calgary. This is the first year the event was held in Edmonton. The MDA Charity Classic encompassed two events – a gala dinner and auction, held at the Marriott River Cree Resort on August 19th and a golf tournament at the Glendale Golf and Country Club the following day.

▶ Thank-you to all the participating dealers & sponsors for making this event a success.

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Special Olympics

Alberta

WINNING AT LIFE