

NEWS

Mayor's Ball raises \$25K for local charities

By Robert Koch

NORWALK — A smaller venue limited turnout in Norwalk's annual Mayor's Community Ball in January, but the dollars raised are greatly appreciated by two local charitable organizations.

At City Hall on Wednesday morning, Mayor Harry Rilling presented a \$12,500 check to representatives of Norwalk Community Health Center and another \$12,500 check to representatives of The Marvin/Under One Roof — the two organizations he chose as recipients of proceeds from the ball.

"This is our 21st anniversary this year and we're thrilled to be honored," said The Marvin/Under One Roof Executive Director Mary Windt. "Residents are anxious to know what's coming through and we're looking for you to come back again."

Windt said the organization would use the proceeds for resident programs and special events.

The Marvin/Under One Roof opened as a congregate-housing facility at 60 Gregory Blvd. in 1997, and since has expanded to include a preschool center for children and assisted-living services for seniors.

Norwalk Community Health Center, at 120 Connecticut Ave., provides medical, dental and behav-



Mayor Harry Rilling, third from right, presents checks from the proceeds from Norwalk's annual Mayor's Community Ball to Mary Windt and Craig Glover at City Hall in Norwalk on Wednesday.

Erik Trautmann / Hearst Connecticut Media

ioral health services for approximately 14,000 patients annually, and handles 250 appointments daily, according to CEO Craig Glover.

"We'll use our money for continuing programs," Glover said. "We have a lot of programs around town — obesity, diabetic care for adults — so it will go into

helping us maintain those programs and expand those."

Rilling, joined by his wife, Lucia, and his staff, praised the organizations for their work in the community.

"Both of these organizations do so much for so many people," Rilling said.

He thanked his staff and his wife for arranging the

2018 ball, which took place Jan. 26 at the Waters Edge at Giovanni's in Darien.

About 350 people attended the event. The number was down from the roughly 580 people who attended the ball when it was at the Italian Center of Stamford in 2017, and during the many years it was at the Continental Manor in Norwalk.

The manor closed as a catering facility, and the Italian Center was unavailable due to repairs. Rilling said it was a challenge to find a venue that could hold 600 people while keeping the ticket costs and raising money for the charitable organizations. In the end, the decision was made to choose the smaller venue

in Darien.

"Next year, we're hoping that we can go back to the place where we were," said Rilling, referring to the Italian Center.

Frank Esposito, who served as Norwalk mayor from 1987 to 2001, initiated the ball to raise money for local charitable organizations.