

Lions Club Members Meet Their Scholar

Diana Lavoie surprised by teacher who inspired her

PETERBOROUGH — Lions Club members often don't have the opportunity to meet the people who benefit from their donations, but Monday night was an exception.

Former ConVal High School student Diana Lavoie was present at the Lions meeting, along with her mother, Diane Lavoie and John Vance, president of the ConVal Community Scholarship Foundation Dollars for Scholars.

Arthur Giovannangeli, the teacher who inspired Diana, was a surprise guest.

The mission of the scholarship foundation involves giving scholarship money, hope and confidence to disadvantaged students so they can reach their potential.

The foundation awarded Diana the 2008 two-year \$5,800 Peterborough Lions Club scholarship (funded by the Lions in partnership with the ConVal Community Scholarship Foundation) to study chemistry education at Plymouth State University. She was named to the dean's list in her first semester.

Diane said it was winning this award that made college possible for her daughter.

During her first two years at ConVal High School, college was not on Diana's radar and she did not do well academically. She enjoyed sports and also like working at RiverMead Retirement Community.

Diane has a full-time job at Dartmouth Hitchcock Med-

ical Center, but family resources were insufficient to encourage her daughter to think about going to college. Diana's father had been on disability because of the chemotherapy that cured his cancer and was unemployed.

But in her junior year, Diana said, everything changed. She called her chemistry class, taught by Giovannangeli, her "defining moment." She loved the class. As a result, learning became more important to her and her grades improved.

On Monday night Diana had expected to meet the Lions, but she was surprised to see the teacher who had inspired her was there, too.

Proud of his former student, Giovannangeli said,

"Diana is proving that hard work makes success. She is succeeding and I am really glad to be here and to see that she is."

Vance said, "It was a happy occasion to introduce Diana and her mother to the Peterborough Lions Club members who made her award possible. She is a fine example of what we are trying to achieve."

Jack Nieskens, club president, said the club takes "special satisfaction ... in supporting such a deserving student." Referring to the Lions' annual summer fundraiser, the Lucky Duck Race, he said, "A lot of ducks race down the Nubanusit to raise the money for this award."



COURTESY PHOTO

Diana Lavoie and Arthur Giovannangeli react after their surprise meeting at the Peterborough Lions Club meeting Monday night.