

It didn't take long for SaskEnergy's team of extraordinary balloon sellers to sell off 100 balloons for \$10 a piece at the annual Salvation Army Red Shield Luncheon on November 16th.

Of course, the prizes didn't hurt either.

Inside each balloon was a raffle ticket and a chance to win one of ten fantastic prize packages ranging from a piece of Saskatchewan-made pottery to World Junior Hockey Championship tickets to winter warm-up goodies and supplies for a fun-filled family game night.



Prize packages donated by SaskEnergy, including a 2010 Roughriders Calendar, a piece of pottery and World Junior Hockey Championship tickets.

By the time lunch was served, nearly every second luncheon guest had a red balloon floating from his or her chair, making a lovely sea of red throughout the Hotel Saskatchewan's ballroom. And with only 10 balloons remaining, Bevan Sthamann from Sthamann Homes generously pledged \$150 for the whole lot!



Balloons floated from the chairs of luncheon guests, who eagerly awaited the moment when they could pop theirs to see if they had won.

During lunch, keynote speaker, actor and musician Dr. Tom Jackson, shared his personal story of triumph over adversity.

Born on the One Arrow reserve in Saskatchewan, Jackson grew up in Winnipeg where he dropped out of school at the age of 15. For the next seven years, he lived in crawl spaces on the back streets of Winnipeg.



Keynote speaker Dr. Tom Jackson spoke of the challenges he faced on his path to success.

Jackson talked about his journey out of that situation and the path that led him to personal and professional success. Those experiences, he said, continue to motivate his commitment to helping others. And he added that organizations like The Salvation Army and the Food Bank are important resources for people in need, but they need public support in order to sustain the vital services they offer.

"I think we as human beings have always understood the need to give," said Jackson. "We always wanted to give, but we can't all be in the trenches. We can't all do the things we know need to be done, so we need to partner up with others who, in fact, can do that."

Following his inspirational speech, Jackson graced the audience with haunting renditions of "Desperado" and "Twas in the Moon of Wintertime."



Jackson moved the audience with his musical performance.

Finally, at the end of the program, came the much-anticipated simultaneous popping of 100 balloons as guests retrieved their raffle tickets and winners claimed their prizes.

Well...99 balloons actually; there was one renegade balloon that floated to the ceiling and out of reach. Luckily, it wasn't a winner though!

Thanks to everybody who helped out and congratulations on a job well done - \$1050 in 30 minutes is quite an accomplishment and will go a long way to help people in need.