

Carders honored for philanthropy

Glick Award banquet will honor owners of BJ's for many years of service

By Zack Hoopes

Staff Writer

(Dec. 26, 2014) The invitations for next Saturday's Glick Award Gala state that Billy and Maddy Carder are being honored "for their many years of philanthropy."

But don't let that throw you off.

"I don't really consider us philanthropists," Maddy said. "That makes it sound like we're in charge of a foundation or something. That's not us...we just give to the people who we know need a hand. It blows my mind how generous this community is."

On Jan. 3, the Carders will be presented with the fourth-ever Glick Award during a gala at the Clarion Hotel, recognizing their extensive charitable giving over nearly 35 years of owning their 75th Street restaurant, BJ's on the Water.

All proceeds from table sponsorships — which run up to \$500 per plate — will go toward further giving.

Given the magnitude of the event, it would be easy to lose track of the fact that the Carders themselves never set out for any great celebrity in the world of philanthropy.

"I guess we just didn't know how to



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For Maddy and Billy Carder, their giving back to the community is more spontaneous than it is a matter of planning.

say no," Billy said. "We were always hoping to be able to give back. We have good years and bad years at the restaurant, but we always try to give something."

Whether he likes it or not, however, most the attention next weekend will

be directed toward Billy, and the fact that the man who has given so much was on death's doorstep only a year ago.

The Glick Award started in 2010 with the recognition of Hal Glick, the pioneering Ocean City Realtor. The

'Somebody needs help, you're there for them'

next year, the award — now bearing Glick's name — was given to Seacrets owner Leighton Moore, and the year after that to Clarion owner Dr. Lenny Berger. All three men are known for giving considerable sums of their business fortunes to charitable causes.

The fourth award was to be given to the Carders in the fall of 2013, but Billy's rapidly declining health made that less feasible. He was struggling through a second bout with cancer, which had first gone into remission in 2000.

"It was surreal," Maddy said. "How were we going to do this event? Just that quickly, we were given the option of a bone marrow transplant. It was really the only way to save my husband's life."

The award ceremony was postponed indefinitely, and the Carders spent two-and-a-half months at Johns Hopkins while Billy recuperated from the surgery. Leaving behind their home on the shore, Maddy moved into a studio apartment provided by the hospital.

"It's amazing what you can live without...you can't begin to describe that journey," Maddy said.

Once he was released from the hospital, Billy spent another three-and-a-half months housebound, unable to go into public places lest he risk an infection with his heavily

weakened immune system.

"I got to know our dogs really well, and Maddy got to know the restaurant," Billy said.

Throughout the ordeal, the unwavering support of the community and especially the Carders' own employees, helped to hold things together.

"They had all seen me before I went in for the transplant," Billy said. "I was swollen up from the chemotherapy, had to use a walker, and was nearly blind. Everyone knew how hard it was going to be, and they really stepped up to the plate."

The outpouring of community support was massive as well. Cards, prayers and spreads of food rolled in, many from people the Carders had never met before, but who knew them as keystones of the community.

"It's amazing how people come to the call, which inspired us to put more emphasis on giving back," Billy said. "We had a waiting list of people to take care of our dogs, to watch the house."

"When you see the amount of cards and letters and prayers that went our way...it doesn't always have to be money," Maddy said.

In fact, the experience reinforced her belief that charity is more about doing what's right for the community and less about feeding the financial machine.

"I'm very satisfied with what we've

been able to do...my goal is to never put a dollar figure on things," Maddy said. "We're asking people to contribute so that we can contribute. I don't put that monkey on my back of 'more, more, more.'"

Billy had no idea how much the restaurant has given away in the past 35 years. Enough to support what needs supported is his best guess.

"We kind of have a budget in our head, but it's pretty spontaneous," he said. "We have our main charities, and we try not to add to the list too much, to spread ourselves too thin."

Funds from the Glick Award Gala will go toward Atlantic General Hospital, Relay for Life, Children's House by the Sea, the Worcester County Humane Society, Kenille's Kupboard, and Temple Bat Yam.

"There's a lot that isn't really writ-

ten down. If somebody needs help, you're there for them," Maddy said.

The Carders and their restaurant came of age when Ocean City was a much tighter-knit community — physically as well as emotionally — than it is now, which begs the question of where local philanthropy will be in another decade or two.

Nearly all of Ocean City's big businessmen, and big charitable contributors, were the bus boys of 40 years ago.

"We all came from different places trying to make it. It bonds you together," Billy said.

BJ's is still fully open year-round. But many of its former clientele has spread out and moved across the bridge. The community of old-hand Ocean City service workers is not as

See FOR BILLY Page 11

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