

Choices valued for contribution

By Sarah Sobanski

Anyone attending physiotherapy at the North Hastings Hospital will now be visiting the Volunteers of Choices Thrift Store Physiotherapy Department.

Chair of the North Hastings Fund Development Committee Kim Bishop announced that the physiotherapy department would be named for the thrift shop's volunteers at a celebratory event April 12 at the hospital. It's raised more than \$379,000 for the hospital through the committee since 1991, including \$40,000 this past year.

These donations have been put towards developing the physiotherapy department, buying new, top-quality equipment from places like Remington Medical, and providing further training to staff so there are more treatment options available for patients.

"As a committee, we decided that we wanted to formally thank Choices for all that [it] do[es] for health care in our community and specifically for our hospital," said Bishop at the event.

President and CEO for Quinte Health Care Mary Clare Egberts attended along with Bancroft's acting Mayor Paul Jenkins, vice chair of Quinte Health Care's board of directors Stuart Wright, manager of patient services for Quinte Health Care-North Hastings Tammy Davis, president for the thrift shop Shelley Brown and a large number of its volunteers.

Egberts suggested hospitals are held up and flourish because of community support.

"Quinte Healthcare is made up of four hospitals and all of them have been started by the volunteers in their own communities. Of course, North Hastings is exactly the same," said Egberts. "Here we are today celebrating some very important volunteers in our community who are absolutely making a difference for your local hospital. I continue to be just amazed at how generous this very small community is and obviously your hospital is very important to you. We're very thrilled to have this hospital not just for the people who live here year round, but seasonally for all the people who come and visit. I know it's a little gem and I know you're helping to make sure we keep it that way."

According to the [Choices Thrift and Gift Shop Facebook](#) page, almost \$700,000 in total has been donated by the shop to local health-care services since the early '90s.

Wright drew attention to just how hard the volunteers must have worked to raise such large donations.

"I'm a volunteer and I know the value of volunteering and how important it is to the community," said Wright. "When I hear the number that we're talking about here, and I'm thinking your average sale is \$4, [I] think about how many things you had to sell to get to that kind of number and the amount of work and effort it takes to do that. It's a tremendous accomplishment."

Davis expressed the thanks of hospital staff for the thrift shop and its volunteers. There was also gratitude expressed across the speakers for the community members who donate to the thrift shop so it has things to sell.

"[Staff] are reaping the benefits of all your hard work in all of the wonderful equipment that we have to use in our emergency and in our in-patient unit. The one thing that I brag about the most is a bariatric bed which we love and use a lot," said Davis.

"They're just an amazing bunch of people," said Brown of the volunteers after the announcement.