

Annual report by fund committee

Approximately 20 years ago, a committee was struck to raise funds for an X-ray machine in the Bancroft hospital. As the need for new equipment continued, the North Hastings Fund Development Committee, a great group of volunteers, worked and continues to work together to help meet those needs. As a committee of the Belleville General Hospital Foundation, we are allowed access to the invaluable experience and expertise the staff of the foundation has to offer.

It has been a pleasure for me to serve as chair of the committee, whose mandate is to raise awareness of the need for ongoing support for medical equipment emphasizing in providing Quinte Health Care North Hastings (QHCNH) with the best equipment possible.

In the last 10 years, we have raised and spent over \$1.8 million ? an impressive sum with the size of our community, our per capita income (among the lowest in Ontario) and the number of other organizations that need donor money.

A couple of good news stories from our last year:

Coffee with a donor who had requested we chat about our committee goals and mandate, discussed the cost to raise a dollar and where and how money is spent. This \$2 coffee transformed into a \$25,000 gift.

A seasonal resident called Tammy, our site administrator, and reported he and his wife had a \$10,000 donation. Tammy invited them to the Committee meeting. We happily greeted these new donors. They asked a few questions about each member at the table, chatted about why they wanted to support a hospital in a community where they are only seasonal residents in. We could see the direction of their questions were towards cost to raise money and the number of staff we employ. Our answers satisfied them ? less than five cents, and one part time/as needed staff member. They walked into the room as new donors with \$10,000 to give. We took their picture in front of the donor wall with their new cheque of \$20,000.

Although raising money is the end goal, it is not our sole purpose. This work is about making and sustaining relationships. It is about cultivating ongoing support. It is about accountability and stewardship. As Chair of the Fund Development Committee I also spend time within the community. I find myself valuing the time spent with the auxiliary and a local organization called Choices. Both of these organizations make our job much easier. They are volunteers totally committed to financially supporting health care in North Hastings. It is important to always be educating the community on current events in the hospital and building relationships with past, current and prospective donors. I think over the past 10 years that I've been chairing this committee we have been very successful in fulfilling this mandate.

We create awareness through several avenues ? by publishing articles in the media, sending an annual letter to donors, and the community at large ? this works as an educational tool as well as an annual appeal. We speak at meetings when asked and attend staff huddle with hospital staff to share what's going on.

This past year we have seen an increase with in memorials. This is a testament to the exceptional care patients and families are receiving.

Our donor wall was the focus of upgrading and auditing this spring. When the hospital opened in 2000, the donor wall had approximately 350 plaques. We now have in excess of 500. This represents a very committed and grateful community.

The fund development committee recently approved funding in the amount of \$85,000 towards capital equipment for 2016-17. The equipment will aid patients and staff in both the emergency department and the in-patient department.

We as a committee are encouraged by the increased open dialogue between our committee and the Bd of Governors of QHCNH. We've been invited to share the same goals, attend each others meetings and ask questions. We welcomed Darlene O'Farrell, local QHCNH board member, to our meetings. We are looking forward to improving opportunities to come together.

We will continue to strive to build connections, raise money and work in partnership with QHCNH in order to provide the best possible health care for the communities that we serve. We are fully committed to supporting one of the best equipped rural hospitals in Ontario.

Kim Bishop is chairwoman of North Hastings Fund Development for Quinte Health Care North Hastings