

## Hospice receives another financial shot in the arm

Published Monday May 11th, 2009 – Telegraph Journal

### Funds Hike for Hospice brings in \$15,000 and woman donates another \$5,000 after winning contest

JEFF DUCHARME  
TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN - The weather may have been grey and raining, yet it was anything but that for the Hospice Greater Saint John. Hike for Hospice raised \$15,000 and a nation-wide contest added another \$5,000 to the fundraising drive.



Noel Chenier/Telegraph-Journal

From left are Pat Woods, chair of Hospice Saint John, donation prize winner Irene Thomson, Dr. Nancy Grant and Brian Kierstead of Bayshore Home Health.

The walk was held at Rockwood Park.

A friend asked Irene Thomson to go online and vote for her favourite hospice as part of a contest organized by Bayshore Home Health. The winner could then donate the \$5,000 prize to the hospice of their choice.

"I'm pretty excited," Thomson said. "I'm happy it's going to Saint John. It's wonderful. It will go a long way."

A physiotherapist at the Saint John Regional Hospital, Thomson knows just how important having a hospice is.

"We work toward getting them home and getting them better, but it's not always the case so it's wonderful to have a service like this out there that can provide such wonderful care to these people."

Hospice chair Pat Woods said the \$5,000 gift says a lot about Thomson.

"It just says a lot about the individual," Woods said. "The weather wasn't with us, but the crowds certainly were."

About 100 people came out for the event.

"I'm very encouraged by the results," Woods said. "We had young people, we had old people, we had walkers, we had runners, pole walkers and it grows every year despite the weather."

Sandy Johnson, executive director of the hospice, said some 500 people voted for the Saint John hospice during the online contest.

"We were really lucky that she was the one that got picked and she donated it to us," Johnson said.

The fundraising drive continues to pick up speed.

"We pray a lot," she said with a big laugh. "It's just meant to be. It's going to happen. The community is the one that's pushing it forward and making it happen."

Renovations on the hospice are underway, but there's still \$500,000 left to raise.

"That's our big push right now. We really need to get that money raised so we can complete renovations."

Johnson hopes the federal government will match the \$320,000 that the provincial government pitched in. If the feds do come through, Johnson is confident they can raise the remainder of the \$1.6 million total needed to open the doors. To date, \$1.1 million has been raised.

"I'm really hopeful that shortly we're going to have some really good news coming our way."