

## Hospice hopes city's online voters will extend their winning streak

SAINT JOHN - Two minutes, the click of a button and a little luck could be worth \$5,000 for Hospice Greater Saint John.



*Peter Walsh/Telegraph-Journal*

Sandy Johnson of Hospice of Greater Saint John says voting for the local hospice in the online contest is one way for people to help the facility without reaching into their pockets. You can enter by visiting [www.bayshore.ca](http://www.bayshore.ca). The contest closes on April 30.

Bayshore Home Health, a company that offers home and community health care services across Canada, has launched a national online contest that could benefit the local hospice. People are invited to log on to [www.bayshore.ca](http://www.bayshore.ca) and enter a ballot to win \$5,000 for their area hospice. The winner will be chosen in a random draw.

"Our community has been generous all along and this is one way to help us without reaching into their pockets," said Sandy Johnson, executive director of Hospice Greater Saint John. "The more ballots you have, the more chances you have to win."

The contest is a perfect fit for Saint Johners who have proved to be dedicated online voters.

In early February, Saint Johners won the Animal Rescue League \$10,000 from animal protection group Care2, which asked people across North America to vote for their favourite animal shelter.

Rocky's Sports Bar was the next to benefit from the generosity of Saint John online voters. The Port City establishment won the title of Canada's Best Sports Bar 2009 in a national online competition sponsored by Rogers Sportsnet at the end of February.

Johnson said she hopes the hospice competition is the city's online "threepeat."

"Saint Johners like to support Saint John," Johnson said. "We may be a smaller city than many in Canada but we are the little engine that could and can and does."

If the local hospice wins, Johnson said the \$5,000 would go directly toward renovations for the residential respite home that will care for up to 10 people at a time during the last weeks of their lives.

The group is \$500,000 short of its \$1.6-million renovation goal.

The hospice is in negotiations with the provincial government to secure a partnership that could pay the majority of the residential home's annual operating costs.

Johnson said the goal is to have the renovation funds raised by the end of this summer; renovations completed by the fall and be open by April 2010.

The hospice will be located in a building at 385 Dufferin Row.

Tina Landry, an employee in the marketing department of the Saint John Bayshore branch, is urging everyone to go online and enter the contest so the local hospice can be closer to its goal of opening the first residential hospice centre in Atlantic Canada.

"Everyone in my family is entering," Landry said. "I couldn't pick a better charity than hospice. They help people when they are at the most difficult time of their life."

The contest closes on April 30 and the winner will be announced on May 4.

Citizens can enter by visiting [www.bayshore.ca](http://www.bayshore.ca), clicking on the hospice donation draw graphic, and typing the password HOSPICE DRAW.

Johnson said citizens can also help raise money for the renovations by joining the Hike for Hospice that will be held at Rockwood Park on May 9.

"Vote, get engaged in the hike, learn more about us and call us if you need help," Johnson said.