

Back the Cat receives second donation from Bancroft Masonic Lodge



By Nate Smelle

The 'Back the Cat' fundraising campaign received another boost from the Bancroft Masonic Lodge No. 482 last week, with the Brethren contributing an additional \$4,966 to help bring a CT scanner to the Quinte Health-Care North Hastings Hospital in Bancroft.

Back the Cat chair Kim Bishop and North Hastings Hospital Fund Development Committee member Sharon Oram received the donation from Kevin Fudge outside the hospital on Wednesday, Aug. 2, who was there to present the cheque on behalf of the Lodge. Having had to travel out of town for a CT scan in the past, Fudge can appreciate how much a CT scanner will improve the quality of health-care in the Bancroft area. After reminding his fellow Masons about the steep costs incurred by residents of North Hastings whom need to travel to Belleville or beyond to receive a CT scan, he said they stepped up right away to support the campaign.

'Think about what it does in terms of patient transfer alone,' said Fudge. 'When you look at everything this piece of equipment does it affects every single one of us, so what are we going to do about it.'

Expressing how thankful they are for the continued support of the Bancroft Masonic Lodge No. 482, Bishop acknowledged how the hospital has the potential to touch the lives of every person who lives in or visits North Hastings.

'This is just wonderful, and we are so grateful,' said Bishop. 'We're absolutely going to save lives... If we can help alleviate the cost and stress from patient transfers alone, it is pretty amazing. We know that over 2,000 people went to Belleville last year; either from the hospital or their doctor's office. That's only the ones that went to Belleville; we don't know how many went to Peterborough or Cobourg.'

In order to purchase and install the CT scanner in Bancroft the committee needs to raise \$2.5 million. To help them reach their target, Fudge said the Bancroft Masonic Lodge plans to make a third contribution in the coming months. Recognizing that most doctors expect there to be a CT scanner available in every hospital, Bishop and Oram said the new equipment will also improve the local quality of health-care because it will attract physicians to practice in the area. 'To have this machine here is definitely a drawing card for a physician who wants to come in and actually stay here; or even come in for the short-term,' explained Bishop. 'This equipment is an expectation to provide the level of care that we need to provide. Sometimes the doctor needs to see that first before they can give a diagnosis. If a patient say needs to go to Kingston, we don't have a CT scan so we have to send that patient down to Belleville to get the CT scan; they come back, we find the right hospital for them to go to, then they go back out to the hospital. Whereas if they can get the CT scan here, it's read right away, so we can send the patient to the right centre for care. So

forget the Belleville trip, we can send them right to Kingston, which is huge. Noting how generous the community has been, Bishop said the Lodge's second donation comes at a good time as they recently began renovations on the space at the hospital where the CT scanner will be located. While the scanner will be installed and the space will be ready sometime in early to mid-November, she said they expect it to be fully operational by the beginning of December. Once the CT scanner is installed, Bishop said it will be used 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She said staff is ready to go, however they still plan to spend a few days at the Belleville Hospital for additional "hands-on" training.