

Cheque presentation for \$1,575 goes toward the Back the Cat initiative



By **Mike Riley**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Shawano Rate Payers Inc. on Dickey Lake raised money from an annual swim they do to support the hospital in memory of resident Diane Warden's husband, who passed away in 1996. This year, they raised a record \$1,575 for the hospital, which they decided to donate to the Back the Cat initiative, to bring a CT scanner to the Quinte North Hastings Hospital. The cheque presentation occurred on Sept. 7 at the hospital.

Warden tells Bancroft This Week that the Shawano Rate Payers Inc. on Dickey Lake have been raising money for years. She says it started out with a cottager, Sandy McMullen, swimming for Eritrea on their annual community Dickey Day years ago, and she joined him.

?After two years, the cottagers and residents wanted to raise money for something local. After 1996, the year my husband passed away, we began raising money for our [Quinte North Hastings Hospital] and have been doing it ever since with a marathon swim event. I along with Sandy and many others, joined in the swim from our boat launch across to an island and back. The number of swimmers has varied from year to year but it is always a fun event,? she says.

Warden says that this year they raised \$1,575, the most money they've been able to donate yet. She says that they generally donated the money toward the purchase of medical equipment, but this year are donating it to the Back the Cat initiative, to procure a new CT scanner for the hospital.

The Back the Cat initiative's fundraising goal is \$2.8 million, and the they are almost at their goal. In fact, construction has already started up at the hospital in the section where the CT scanner will ultimately be located. Having a CT scanner at the local hospital will enable these diagnostic scans to be done here in Bancroft instead of sending patients up to two hours away to get these scans.

A CT scanner is a medical imaging technique to obtain detailed internal images of the body. The Back the Cat campaign will help close a healthcare gap that currently exists in communities across North Hastings. In addition to saving lives, it also serves to attract and retain physicians in our community.

Warden tells Bancroft This Week that they have a wonderful community on Dickey Lake and the people are always most friendly and willing to help.

?It has been a pleasure for me to collect for the hospital, meeting and chatting with cottagers and residents alike,? she says. ?It is a very worthwhile cause for us.?