

Ribbon cutting welcomes hospital's new CT scanner



By **Mike Riley**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held by the Back the Cat fundraising campaign team at the Quinte Health North Hastings Hospital on Feb. 5 to unveil their new Computed Tomography scanner and donor wall. This was the result of the Back the Cat fundraising campaign team successfully raising just over \$3 million to procure the scanner, which did its first patient scan on Jan. 29 and has done 33 scans in its first five days of operation, saving one life. Kim Bishop, the Back the Cat fundraising campaign chair, MPP Ric Bresee for Hastings Lennox and Addington, Gary Hannaford, the vice chair of the Quinte Health Board of Directors, Stacey Daub, CEO of Quinte Health, Tammy Davis, hospital manager of North Hastings Hospital and Dr. Parm Keila, physician group lead, all spoke on this momentous occasion at the hospital on Feb. 5. A brief tour of the CT scanner suite followed, as did the unveiling of the donor wall and light refreshments in the Fireside Room. A CT scanner is a medical imaging technique to obtain detailed internal images of the body. The Back the Cat campaign's success in getting this scanner into the Bancroft hospital closes a healthcare gap that existed in communities across North Hastings. In addition to saving lives, it also serves to attract and retain physicians in our community. 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. Bishop thanked everyone for coming at the ribbon cutting ceremony in the Fireside Room at the North Hastings Hospital on Feb. 5. She said they had a very short window to show everyone the CT scanner as it's been very busy since it began operating on Jan. 29. "After a long journey, a short public phase, we now have the best small rural hospital in Ontario and it has a CT scanner," she says. Bishop said a campaign of this magnitude only happens with the right people. She mentioned the Quinte Health board of directors, Quinte Health senior leadership, North Hastings Fund Development, all the physicians and staff who were committed to getting the CT scanner and training for it, and most importantly the generous donors and volunteers. She said they raised just over \$3 million in cash and pledges and did it under budget. "These accomplishments demonstrate that with the right volunteers working hard donated monies can go almost entirely to the cause," she says. Bishop said that each donor played an essential role in their success and thanked them collectively. She said that in addition to reconnecting with the existing donors, they also expanded their donor base with this campaign. She highlighted a few of the donors that made the acquisition of the CT scanner possible; Faraday Township with a donation of \$500,000, the Hospital Auxiliary with a donation of \$300,000, John Sherman with a donation of \$250,000, and Choices Thrift and Gift Shop with a donation of \$120,000. Bishop also thanked the North Hastings Hospital Fund Development treasurer, Tom Malloy, Davis, former QHC leaders Brad Huntington and Jeff Hohenkerk as well as the current QHC leadership Daub and Bill Tottle, vice president of finance. She also thanked hers and Davis' significant others, Ted and Brian respectively, and also her father, who she said was her biggest champion. "After hours of work, some sleepless nights, over 1,200 donations, over 930 donors, dozens of meetings, emails, phone calls, our North of 7 Casino night, we can all be proud of our role in this success. Thank you for helping us save future lives," she says. Bresee presented Bishop and Davis with a certificate from the Government of Ontario. "So, on behalf of the Government of Ontario, I'm pleased to extend my

sincerest congratulations to the North Hastings Hospital in recognition of the successful addition of your new CT scanner. We're delighted to celebrate this milestone achievement and the collaborative efforts to bring this much needed resource to North Hastings Hospital. Congratulations," he says. After the rest of the speakers, including Hannaford, Daub, Davis, and Dr. Keila spoke, the attendees were taken on a tour of the new CT scanner suite and the new donor wall, highlighting all the donors that contributed to the procurement of this life-saving piece of equipment for the hospital. After that, everyone enjoyed light refreshments in the Fireside Room. Davis said she thought the ceremony went amazingly well and she was overwhelmed with the number of people who attended. "I'm overwhelmed with the wonderful congratulations we received and the donors, what they've done is outstanding, to recognize the fact that they saw this as an important thing to donate towards and gave significant amounts of money. Everyone who donated is important and we appreciate everyone's contributions. Things are moving along faster and better than we imagined they would," she says. Bishop told Bancroft This Week that she hopes everybody is happy, because everyone should be so proud of what they've accomplished in getting the CT scanner to the North Hastings Hospital. "It's amazing the difference it will make. That's what it's all about, excellent healthcare," she says. "We had 33 scans in five days and we saved a life on day two. And you know, that's what it's for."