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Local woman?s 80 acts of kindness for her 80th birthday raises $42,000 for Headwaters

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

An East Garafraxa resident's efforts to complete a year's worth of small acts of kindness has moved Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) one step closer to fully funding a new piece of hospital equipment.

Joanne Everson, a life-long resident of Dufferin County, raised a total of $42,000 for the Headwaters Health Care Foundation (HHCF) after hosting a lunch gathering at her home in December.

Knowing she would be turning 80 years old in August of 2024, Joanne set out at the start of last year to complete a total of 80 deeds of kindness.

?I have had some health issues, and I'm very grateful to be alive so I wanted to make my 80th birthday special for some other people,? she explained.

Over the months, she took part in countless small acts of kindness, such as helping to start a stuck truck with her jumper cables or offering bungee cords to a couple anchoring a piece of furniture to their car.

?They were incidents that would just come in my path and I would want to do the kind thing,? said Joanne. ?It's really important to be kind to people and to show gratitude for Your health.?

By the time the end of the year came around, Joanne hadn't reached her goal of 80 kind deeds, so she decided to host a fundraising event for the local hospital. In December, she welcomed guests into her home for a holiday lunch and despite snowy conditions, roughly 18 guests gathered for food and conversation.

An astonishing $21,000 was raised from the event, which was then matched by the Morningview Foundation for a total donation of $42,000.

?It turned out to be a very successful luncheon,? said Joanne. ?I just had it in my mind that I wanted to do something for other people.?

Joanne and her husband Barry chose to direct the money raised from her luncheon gathering to the Smart Headwaters Campaign, which is looking to raise a total of $18 million for equipment upgrades at the local hospital.

The donation was directed to HHCF's latest project, the purchase of a roughly $7 million magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine.

Previous projects the Smart Headwaters Campaign has helped fund include a CT scanner, redevelopment of the dialysis unit at Headwaters, and updates to the hospital's patient record system.

?We're very grateful to have this kind of grassroots support because honestly, without it, there's no way we could finish any campaign. At this stage, it really comes down to these individual community supports to get us across the finish line,? said Joel Porter, director of philanthropy for Headwaters Health Care Foundation.

?Joanne and the group she assembled represent to us, the best that our community has to offer. Self-motivated efforts and the kind of

care that people choose to give, often to those they'll never know or meet, but that they're helping a lot of people all around out area,? added Porter.

The MRI machine at Headwaters Health Care Centre is estimated to be up and running by early July.

Dufferin County residents have the same opportunity to host their own events to raise donations for the local hospital.

More information can be found online by visiting the website: www.hhcfoundation.com.