

the wave

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2025

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is making a difference.

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La Fondation
Hôpital général
de la baie
Georgienne

Georgian Bay
General Hospital
Foundation

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MESSAGE FROM GBGH FOUNDATION CEO NICOLE KRAFTSCIK AND BOARD CHAIR JOE ROONEY



As we kick off 2025, you have given us so much to celebrate!

Our community came together with so many events and initiatives to support our hospital last year, reminding us of the extraordinary power that we all have to make a positive impact.

We celebrated some incredible successes: a \$3.3-million gift from the Weber Foundation, a fundraising dinner that kicked off our campaign with \$3.35-million, and a huge boost to our MRI fundraising through individual donations and events (page 7). It amazes and humbles us to witness your kindness in action.

Our hospital is so much more than a building, or a place to go in an emergency. GBGH is where lives begin and fears are overcome; it is a collection of life-saving stories and peaceful farewells. Your investment here is giving our GBGH teams the tools and technology they need, so they can focus on providing the kind of care that warms our hearts and makes lasting memories.

You have equipped the team with equipment that makes it safe and easy to deliver vital medication, for comfort and for healing (page 10).

Your investment in diagnostic imaging means that GBGH will be able to provide two new services for our community this year: MRI and Mammography (page 6).

Your dedication to your hospital gives us great hope for the future. Together, we will continue to expand the services available in our own community, so that everyone who needs care can receive it close to home.

When we set our collective sights on strengthening health care for our community, we can achieve it. Thank you for showing up through the holiday season, both in person and online, when the mail strike made giving more challenging. Thank you for believing in GBGH, and for continuing to partner with us to inspire generosity, strengthen healthcare and celebrate impact. We could not do this without you.

With heartfelt thanks,

Nicole Kraftscik
Chief Executive Officer
GBGH Foundation

Joe Rooney
Board of Directors Chair
GBGH Foundation

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ROBBERT HARTOG HEALTH INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS

The Hartog Health Innovation Award recognizes the outstanding achievements of staff and physicians, especially those who demonstrate the characteristics of Robbert Hartog, a volunteer and philanthropist who worked tirelessly on behalf of Georgian Bay General Hospital.

In 2024, the award was presented to two recipients: Dr. Anila Mathai, Chief of Complex Care, Rehab & Palliative Care at GBGH and Erin Couper, Safety & Wellness Officer as part of the Occupational Health & Safety Team.

Dr. Anila Mathai is recognized as a passionate palliative care expert who guides patients and families through difficult end of life decisions, while maintaining the dignity and respect they deserve. She has held the post of Chief, Complex Care & Rehab since 2015, and has been a strong voice and contributor on the Medical Advisory Committee.

Erin Couper is recognized as an optimistic, engaged and innovative thinker. She has made many positive contributions including Wellness Breaks, the development of a Wellness Committee and inaugural Wellness Fair, and developed the policies and procedures necessary to support the innovative Wellness Interest Free Loan initiative to support the GBGH Team.

Congratulations Anila & Erin!



23 MONTHLY DONORS DOUBLE THEIR IMPACT!

On Giving Tuesday – December 3, 2024 – the GBGH Foundation sent out an invitation asking individuals to consider becoming a Monthly Donor.

Our friends, Nick & Marina Boudouris and family (owners of OPA Catering, the World Famous Dock Lunch and Pier 21 Restaurant) sweetened the offer by generously matching all new monthly gifts to the GBGH Foundation for the whole next year.

It was a wonderful reminder for all of us, that wherever you are, you can make an impact at your local hospital. Our monthly donors fund vital equipment and technology that saves and changes lives.

We're thrilled that 20 people became new monthly donors, and 3 existing donors increased their monthly gift!



To learn more about Monthly Giving for GBGHF, visit: gbghf.ca/join-monthly-giving/

CORNERSTONE PARTNERS SPOTLIGHT: MEET BILL AND ANNE MILLS

Having retired more than ten years ago, Bill and Anne moved to Midland and joined Cornerstone Partners, in 2022, when they were invited to do so by their good friends Ted and Laurel.

“As retirees we are aware that in the years to come we may be needing a first-class general hospital. Both Anne and I are cancer survivors of more than ten years each,” says Bill. “With that in mind, Georgian Bay General Hospital (GBGH) factored significantly in our decision to move to Midland.”

As members of Cornerstone Partners, Bill and Anne joined a highly dedicated group of individuals, families and businesses who support the Georgian Bay General Hospital Foundation with an annual gift of \$500 or more.

By partnering with the GBGH Foundation, Bill says “We love the fact that we are making a measurable difference to the growth of our community hospital.”

When asked if there are any particular projects or initiatives that they feel especially passionate about, Bill replied, “From our perspective, we feel passionate about the need for state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment and the expert staff to operate and interpret the output.”

“It’s very important for the community to realize that the Ministry of Health does not pay for diagnostic equipment,” continues Bill. **“If we want the most advanced technology in our community hospital, we need to raise funds to pay for that equipment.”**

In addition, Bill and Anne also feel that the staff who work with the Cornerstone Partners Group are doing a fantastic job of making it easy and enjoyable to contribute to improving our community hospital.



To learn more about Cornerstone Partners
or to join today, visit: gbghf.ca/cornerstone-partners



(FROM LEFT): LEESA SCHOENMAKER & ALY WANG, GBGH PROJECT MANAGERS; AND MATTHEW LAWSON, GBGH PRESIDENT AND CEO.

HOSPITAL UPDATE FROM MATTHEW LAWSON, GBGH CEO EXCITING SERVICE EXPANSIONS!



The past six months have been very busy at Georgian Bay General Hospital!

In June, we broke ground on a 2,500 square foot addition that will house our new **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine**. Since then, we have made dramatic progress, including setting up the site, excavation, fortifying the foundation and footings, connecting plumbing, exterior framing (walls & windows), roof supports and drainage system installation.

In December, the focus switched to interior framing and drywall, mechanical and electrical rough-ins and the installation of radiofrequency shielding in the MRI room.

The shielding is critical, as the invisible magnetic field created by the MRI is always present and is never turned off. The strength of the magnet is 30,000 times the gravitational pull of the Earth, and the pull is exerted on almost all metal objects, causing them to 'fly' toward the machine. For this reason, GBGH must also invest in equipment that can safely operate within the MRI space, including a stretcher, ventilator, vital signs machine and cleaning equipment.

As the interior renovations begin, we are simultaneously working on renovating a space for **Digital Mammography**. GBGH is currently the only hospital in Simcoe-Muskoka that does not have a mammography program, but there are thousands of women in our community who are eligible for regular screening. This program will make this important diagnostic technology available closer to home, resulting in increased screening rates, earlier detection, and better outcomes. We anticipate this program will be up and running later this year.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
OUR MAMMOGRAPHY
PROGRAM, SEE PAGE 8

I want to extend my sincere thanks to our donors and community for making these important developments a reality for our hospital and our patients. **You are making a difference here, and we could not do this without you.**

2024 REASONS TO CELEBRATE

READ MORE BY
SCANNING
THESE QR CODES



SEGBAY GOLF TOURNAMENT

On Thursday, August 15th, the SEGBAY Chamber of Commerce hosted the 11th annual golf tournament, in partnership with Pure Country 106 and BOUNCE 104.1, raising \$26,606 for surgical services at Georgian Bay General Hospital.



GLENN HOWARD CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

The Glenn Howard Charity Golf Classic on July 12th brought together 144 golfers at Midland Golf & Country Club, raising a record-breaking \$200,800 for the new MRI at GBGH. Since 2016, the tournament has raised more than \$1,000,000 for the GBGH Foundation.



CEDAR RIDGE COMMUNITY BBQ

On July 27th, the Cedar Ridge community came together at John & Margaret Leonardo's second annual fundraising BBQ. Thanks to the amazing support for their neighbours, this year's event raised \$110,704 to help bring MRI technology to GBGH.



OAK BAY COMMUNITY CORN ROAST

Larry and Liz Marshall hosted their fourth annual corn roast on August 29th, bringing together the Oak Bay community and raising \$2,040 for GBGH. The corn roast has raised more than \$5,500 over the past four years, mostly through donations from guests in attendance.



WEBER GIFT

On July 2nd, The Weber Foundation presented major gifts to thirteen local charities, including \$3.3-million for the GBGH Foundation. This gift will build on the legacy of The Weber Foundation today, and well into the future. \$2.5-million is dedicated to the Foundation's upcoming capital campaign, and \$833,333 will be invested in the newly named 'Weber Foundation Endowment Fund'.



CELIA'S BAKE SALE

On December 3rd, Mike & Melissa Robinson and family visited the GBGH Foundation to deliver the \$10,100 proceeds from Celia's Bake Sale. Since 2020, Celia's Bake Sale has raised \$38,350 in honour of Mike & Melissa's daughter Celia Marie, who passed away at GBGH on Christmas Day 2019.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT: ERIN KOMINEK

We interviewed Erin Kominek, Manager of Diagnostic Imaging, Cardiorespiratory and Laboratory Services about adding Mammography services at GBGH.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN THE MAMMOGRAPHY PROGRAM?

As the manager of the program, I oversee the daily operations, ensuring that everything runs smoothly, from scheduling and patient care to compliance with regulations and quality standards. I also work closely with the team to ensure they feel supported and to ensure that we deliver the highest standard of care to our patients.

WHY IS GBGH FOCUSED ON ADDING MAMMOGRAPHY SERVICES?

Our region has some of the lowest screening rates, and this can negatively affect patient outcomes. The Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) has a target of 90% of patients diagnosed within 7 weeks of an abnormal screen. **Currently, only 61% of North Simcoe OBSP patients are meeting that target** due to wait times, travel and other barriers to access.

IS THE HOSPITAL READY TO ADD MAMMOGRAPHY?

GBGH is in an excellent position to launch a mammography program! We're opening our MRI in early 2025 and have invested in a breast imaging coil, which is crucial for applying to the Ontario Breast Screening Program as a high-risk site.

We already have a certified breast imaging technologist on staff, which means we have the expertise needed for program planning and mentoring new staff.

And, thanks to the generosity of donors through the GBGH Foundation, we have more than 85% of the funds needed to purchase the Digital Mammography technology (with both 2D and 3D capabilities) and renovate space within the hospital. We anticipate starting renovations in spring 2025.

WHAT WILL THE PROGRAM BE LIKE?

Making excellent care personal is deeply woven into our program planning. We will offer various appointment booking options: by phone, email, and online self-booking. For those who may struggle with planning ahead, we'll have drop-in screening assessment days. And, we also recognize the challenge of taking time off work, so we will offer extended hours to accommodate patients outside of regular working hours.

The space itself will also make the whole experience as welcoming and comfortable as possible, with the use of selective paint colours and artwork, private waiting and change rooms, and allowing patients to wear buttoned or zippered shirts instead of hospital gowns.



For more information about mammography at GBGH, please visit gbghf.ca/mammography



A WARM WELCOME AT GBGH

When baby Joseph was born in July 2023, parents Matt & Lauren had already been back and forth to Georgian Bay General Hospital (GBGH) a few times that week in anticipation of his arrival.

Although their delivery had a few twists and turns, the couple has nothing but great things to say about their experience at the local hospital.

“The team of nurses and doctors involved were nothing short of amazing,” shares Matt. “They were professional but not only that, we felt that they made this whole experience so personal and did a great job of making us feel quite calm as we adapted to Joseph’s plans.”

Matt & Lauren wanted to do something to recognize and honour the amazing care team at GBGH, and learned about the GBGH Family Tree, a digital recognition wall in the main lobby of the hospital. Their gift will be invested in the Obstetrics program at GBGH, ensuring that the Birthing Unit is equipped with the latest equipment and technology to make more amazing birth stories like Joseph’s possible.

“We just want to say thank you so much for making the birth of our baby boy such a positive and personal experience,” says Matt. “Something that I am sure can feel so clinical in other hospitals, felt so personalized and comforting. We appreciate you GBGH.”



For more information on the GBGH Family Tree Baby Wall where baby’s name, birthdate and photo are displayed visit: gbghf.ca/born-at-gbgh

WHAT’S COMING UP!



BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

Thursday March 20, 2025

gbghf.ca/bofc

Join us for a VIRTUAL behind-the-scenes tour, informative presentation and interactive Q&A about your Georgian Bay General Hospital!



McHappy Day.

MCHAPPY DAY

Wednesday May 8, 2025

gbghf.ca/mchappy-day

Our local McDonalds restaurants donate a percentage of total food sales to Ronald McDonald House Charities and the GBGH Foundation.



GLENN HOWARD CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

Friday July 18, 2025

gbghf.ca/glenn-howard-charity-golf

A prestigious tournament with unique golfer gifts and a great online auction.



TEE OFF WITH TAY

Friday August 15, 2025

gbghf.ca/tee-off-with-tay

Tay Township’s 2nd annual mayor’s charity golf tournament.



SEGBAY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Thursday August 21, 2025

gbghf.ca/segbay-golf-tournament

This tournament at Oak Bay Golf Club is jam-packed with fun activities on every hole.



POWER OF GIVING

Saturday September 13, 2025

gbghf.ca/power-of-giving

The Power of Giving is an amazing in-person event bringing the community together to celebrate and support our Georgian Bay General Hospital!

YOUR IMPACT NEW EQUIPMENT AT GBGH

YOU ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE AT GBGH! DONATIONS IN 2024 HAVE ALREADY HELPED TO PURCHASE THESE VITAL PIECES OF EQUIPMENT FOR YOUR HOSPITAL.



PYXIS MEDICATION UNIT | EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

A Pyxis Medication Unit keeps hundreds of medications safely stored right where they are needed. Adding a new unit at Triage in the Emergency Department is putting medications for pain, fever and other urgent concerns safely within reach of the triage team.

The locked unit documents all activity and feature finger print access restricted to those within the care area.

PORTABLE ULTRASOUND | EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

A portable ultrasound is a life-saving tool within a modern Emergency Department, as it can help differentiate between multiple acute life-threatening diagnoses, when every second counts.

Although GBGH has one unit, adding a second - with much better quality visuals - has been so important for a department of our size. We no longer have delays in assessment while waiting for the ultrasound to be available, and we are able to use the new unit for higher acuity and more complex applications, like cardiac cases.



IV INFUSION PUMPS

IV Infusion Pumps are used to deliver medication and fluids to patients in every area of the hospital. Nearly 90% of all patients requiring admission will need some form of intravenous treatment during their stay. These critical pumps ensure that patients receive the right medication, in the right dosage, at the right frequency for the right length of time.

Thanks to you, GBGH now has 50 additional pumps (for a total of 150), which is ensuring that every patient – inpatients, outpatients, surgical and Emergency patients – has access to the best medication delivery, every time.



WITH HEARTFELT THANKS AIDYN'S STORY

As a physician herself, Emily Queenan knew it was time to take her 14-year-old son Aidyn to the ER when he started having trouble breathing.

As Emily recalls, "By the time we got to the ER, Aidyn was struggling to get air in. We were promptly brought into a room and cared for by Dr Marty McNamara and a wonderful nurse. All night long, they treated Aidyn with meds to bring down the swelling in his throat, steroids, epinephrine, and started antibiotics for the infection. A CT scan revealed that there was swelling and a possible peritonsillar abscess (swollen abscess near the tonsils) that could be causing the problem."

Aiden was transferred to another hospital for an ENT consult and just a few days later he recovered and was back to himself.

Grateful for the attention and care Aidyn received, Emily will always be thankful to GBGH for being there when Aidyn couldn't breathe.



To learn more about our Heartfelt Thanks program, visit: gbghf.ca/heartfeltthanks



BUSINESS CARES STRATEGIC PARTNERS

In early 2024, we launched our new business cares partnership tiers to better align with the diversity of business partners, and the unique ways in which they choose to support the GBGH Foundation.

We are pleased to share three local businesses who have stepped up to be the first Strategic Partners in the

Foundation's Business Cares program. Penetang Sand & Gravel,

Team Hawke Realty and Triple Tech Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Inc. have each pledged \$25,000 over the next five years to support the most critical capital priorities at GBGH.

Growth, expansion of services and continuing to 'Make Excellent Care Personal' will be the focus for GBGH in the next few years. These efforts will only be possible with the continued investment and support from the community, including local businesses, who believe in the value of a strong hospital.



For more information on the Business Cares Program, or becoming a Strategic Partner visit: gbghf.ca/get-involved/business-cares





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