

Hospital expresses 'heartfelt thanks'



Staff photo by Fred Loek

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart," said Mayor Hazel McCallion after hearing that the I Heart Hazel campaign to raise \$15 million for cardiac care met its goal. Community leader and philanthropist Fred Ketchen started the campaign off 15 months ago with a \$ 1million gift and thanked the Mayor for her enthusiasm in supporting the campaign.

By: Radhika Panjwani, Mississauga News

June 26, 2009 08:06 PM - The Trillium Health Centre Foundation today thanked the community — and Mayor Hazel McCallion — from the bottom of its heart.

The foundation's I Heart Hazel campaign, launched 18 months ago to support cardiac care at Trillium Health Centre, raised \$15 million.

Foundation officials reserved much of their gratitude for McCallion, who lent her name and time to the campaign, and contributed to its success. Life-size cut-outs of McCallion garbed in hospital scrubs became a symbol of the campaign. The cut-outs graced the hallways of many schools and organizations where money was collected.

At today's ceremony, McCallion and others placed stickers that read "heartfelt thanks, \$15 million raised" on one of the cut-outs at the hospital.

"This hospital is such a blessing to all of us in Mississauga," McCallion said. "What's so important is that our residents don't have to go to Toronto for many of the procedures that they used to previously go for. It's right here in the heart of Mississauga."

McCallion said it doesn't matter how many roads, sewers and bridges a city builds, hospitals are the bedrock of a community.

The most exciting thing about the campaign, said foundation president and CEO Steve Hoscheit, was that the hospital renamed its cardiac centre the Hazel McCallion Centre for Heart Health. He said naming the facility after the Mississauga icon prompted the community to donate.

"It has been a big boost in morale and revenue for the health centre," he said.

Hoscheit said the money raised will go towards supporting various cardiac programs including a cardiac catheterization lab, which has allowed the hospital to embark on an innovative program in which paramedics can transport heart attack patients directly to Trillium for timely treatment.

In 1991, when Mississauga resident Fred Ketchen experienced two heart attacks within a month, he realized the importance of having a world-class cardiac centre close to home.

Ketchen donated \$1 million to the I Heart Hazel campaign.

"In 1991, when I had the two heart attacks, I was in here both times, but they couldn't do all the tests," Ketchen said. "I had to go by ambulance to the Western Hospital and come back...that's an expensive process. Now we can do all that here. The excellence of care in this place makes me believe that I am quite happy that if I have to have another heart attack, I can get looked after here."

Just as the campaign was about to close, it received another \$1 million donation, this one from the estate of John Allan, also of Mississauga.