

March 24, 2014

## Family tradition passed to future generations

After 28 years of supporting Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH), Bob and Sheila Burk have once again demonstrated their generosity with a \$100,000 pledge to the health centre. Specifically, the funds will be directed toward RVH's future advanced cardiac care program. Both Bob and Sheila would like the younger generations of Burks to experience this tradition of giving. During a recent tour to RVH, they brought their grandson, Peyton, 10, along to see firsthand the importance of donor support to the health centre and patient care.

"Advanced cardiac care is a high priority for this region, and if our friends, family and fellow residents have heart problems, we want them to receive care closer to home," says Bob Burk. "RVH is such an important fixture in the communities of Barrie and Simcoe Muskoka it is important our families, including future generations, do what we can to help RVH continue expanding their services."

Nearly a decade ago, a 'heart adventure' as Bob Burk calls it, could have put an end to his active life was it not for the treatment he received at Southlake Regional Health Centre. Locally there is not a hospital that could do the diagnosis and treatment necessary for heart patients. In the past year, 3,500 heart patients have had to travel outside Simcoe Muskoka for diagnosis and treatment. North Simcoe Muskoka is the only one of 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN) in the province without an advanced cardiac care program within its borders. This lack of local care can be detrimental to the outcome for heart patients. In cardiac events like a heart attack, time is muscle. The longer a person waits for medical care, the more damage to the heart.

"The gold standard of treatment is 90 minutes between having a heart attack and receiving advanced cardiac care," says Janice Skot, president and CEO, RVH. "Sixty per cent of residents in Simcoe Muskoka live outside this critical window of opportunity. Additionally, travelling for this critical care puts an unnecessary burden both on patients and their families. It shouldn't have to be this way and I am inspired when I see a family like the Burks so dedicated to helping fellow residents in the region receive advanced cardiac care. I am also moved by the tradition of generosity they are passing along to their family's younger generations."

The Burks make regular personal donations because they believe in supporting healthcare.

"We choose to help healthcare facilities for several reasons – one, I am so grateful for the top notch care I have received at my local hospitals," says Bob Burk. "We know financial contributions from the community pay for essential equipment and finally, if you are able to give, whether a lot or a little, it's the right thing to do. If our contributions enable someone else to have more time with their grandchildren, with their family and friends, that is really one of the most compelling reasons we've got for giving."

With RVH's \$450 million expansion complete, the health centre is focused on continuing to bring specialized programs closer to home, including advanced heart care, child mental health and women's cancer services, while expanding clinical research. RVH relies 100 per cent on the generosity of donors to fund new equipment that ensures safe, high quality care.

-30-

For more information:

**Suzanne Legue**  
Chief Communications Officer  
705-728-9090 ext. 41600

**Jennifer Moore**  
Corporate Communications  
705-728-9090 ext. 41618

About RVH:

RVH is a regional health centre in Barrie, Ontario, located 80 kilometres north of Toronto. As the largest hospital in the region of Simcoe Muskoka, RVH's team of over 350 physicians, 2,500 employees and 850 volunteers provides exceptional care and specialty services to almost half a million residents, including cancer care, stroke services, orthopaedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering high-quality, safe care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit [www.rvh.on.ca](http://www.rvh.on.ca)