

Pink in the Rink: over \$18,000 raised for cancer care!

Every October since 2011, the Mariners play in pink jerseys as part of their annual Pink in the Rink fundraiser. At the end of the month, each jersey is auctioned off as a for the Cancer Centre. This year, an incredible \$18,070 was raised, and Mary Surette, Yarmouth Hospital Foundation's managing director, was on hand at the game on November 12th to accept the cheque. Go Mariners!

"Pink in the Rink is such an important community initiative," Mary told us. "Thank you to the Mariners for their support and thank you, also, to everyone who donated. Unfortunately, cancer touches so many lives."

Keith Condon, business director for the Mariners, added, "When I was sick, I met many people who couldn't afford drugs and travel for cancer care. That's why I take this so seriously."

Pictured: Mark Nelson & Candice Rose of C&C Flooring (sponsors) present the cheque to Mary Surette (YHF MD) and Paula Watkins (clinical nurse educator).



Photo: Ken Chetwynd

X Marks the Spot: new digital X-Ray installed thanks to our donors



This May, Diagnostic Imaging staff and physicians joined the Yarmouth Hospital Foundation in celebrating the installation of a new digital x-ray unit. The digital unit replaces an analog unit that was over 20 years old in 2021 when the foundation made the commitment to fund the purchase of the new unit. And now, since May, thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Diagnostic Imaging team is able to provide faster, improved imaging for patients with a unit that uses less radiation than older machines.

Digital radiography produces higher quality images much faster while cutting down on patients' exposure to radiation. Diagnostic Imaging Manager Randy Wallace told us that "Digital radiography means we can get patients through more quickly. This is very beneficial for emergency patients and those suffering trauma that require imaging."

Dr. Chris Connolly, Director of Diagnostic Imaging for the Western Zone, said he's grateful for the role of foundation in bringing what he describes as 'game-changing' equipment to Yarmouth Regional Hospital. "The foundation has been an absolutely incredible partner. I don't want to position you as just funders, because you are so much more than that."

Maple Grove students STOMP to YHF with a generous donation

When then-Grade 8 students Leila Ben Mohamed and Chris Coggins (pictured) arrived at the Yarmouth Hospital Foundation office at the Yarmouth Regional Hospital in June to present a cheque for \$759.15, the Maple Grove students were excited to share how they raised the money and why they chose to donate to the foundation. They were part of STOMP, a pilot project help grades 7-12 students develop an understanding tobacco use/vaping and the consequences.

STOMP stands for Students Together Moving to Prevent Tobacco Use, explained faculty adviser and Grade 7 teacher Max Taylor. The group consists of student council members, athletes and kids who have experienced vaping themselves. Vaping is pretty common among students, Leila and Chris agree. Smoking not so much. Kids perceive that vaping is a healthier alternative to smoking and don't appreciate the dangers, their teacher pointed out. It's more accessible and "you're not walking around smelling of it."

"It's a program where you're helping the community, you're helping your friends be aware of vaping. It's a powerful message," said Chris. Leila explained that they made presentations and posters inspired by the STOMP message. They also had donation jars in each classroom, Chris added. "If you raised a certain amount of money, Mr. Taylor would get pied in the face."

Chris said the program has had a good response and made at least one convert. A friend of his stopped after hearing their presentation. "We chose the foundation to donate to because most people affected by smoking or vaping have to come to the hospital if they are having problems," Leila said. "Everyone needs the hospital one time or another."

"I am so impressed by this awareness program that these students took part in, as well as their generous donation to our regional hospital," said foundation managing director Mary Surette. "A huge thank you to these extraordinary young people!"

Maple Grove is one of about a dozen test locations across Canada for STOMP, an initiative of Physical Health and Education Canada. The two-year pilot project was launched at Maple Grove for the 2022-23 school year.



Jill, Barry & Mitchell Ellis

The Palliative Care Unit & the Ellis family

Jill Ellis has great appreciation for the care her father, Barry, received in his final days in the Palliative Care Unit at Yarmouth Regional Hospital earlier this year. The Palliative Care Unit is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with terminal illness by preventing and relieving suffering. Their staff also help a family cope during a family member's illness and death; Jill agreed to share her story to help make the idea of end-of-life care less frightening for someone else's family.

Barry Ellis was a hardworking man and his coworkers all thought the world of him, Jill said. He had a career working traffic control with Dexter's Construction and Black Top Traffic Services. And he was just 64 when he received the news that the thyroid cancer he'd been battling was inoperable and terminal. By that point he'd had surgery to remove the thyroid — the surgeons found the cancer had spread and wrapped around his esophagus so they couldn't remove it all — followed by radiation, and then a tracheotomy because the tumour had grown back and was blocking his airway.

On March 1, his family brought him from Digby, where they're all from, to Yarmouth Regional Hospital. Barry then spent his final 45 days in Palliative Care. The staff were all very kind and supportive, Jill said. "They made dad feel comfortable and got him everything he wanted." The Palliative Care staff also were very supportive of Jill, her brother, Mitchell, and other family members as they supported their father during his final weeks and even kept in touch in the months that followed his death.

"The last time I heard his voice was in the parking lot of Tim Hortons the day before he went to Halifax for the tracheotomy," Jill Ellis recalled wistfully. "I miss him." Her father, she told us, was a good man who would drop anything to help someone out. "He loved his family and we were everything to him. We miss him every day."



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