

Widbur Tournament makes record donation to Headwaters hospital



By Brian Lockhart

Over the past 11 years, the Jennifer Widbur Memorial Hockey Tournament has produced a huge contribution through their fundraising effort for the Headwaters Health Care Centre and after this year's tournament, the Honeywood Hockey Moms donated a record amount for their annual gift.

The Hockey Moms delivered a cheque for \$65,000 to the hospital after the 2018 tournament.

That brings the group's total to \$510,000 that has been raised for cancer care at the hospital.

The annual tournament takes place at Honeywood arena and is organized and hosted by the Honeywood Hockey Moms, a group of local women who play hockey and organize and run the tournament.

This year the group also made a \$2,000 donation to Honeywood Minor Hockey as well as a \$1,500 contribution to the fund in support of the Humboldt Broncos, the hockey team involved in the tragic accident in Saskatchewan in April.

Teams from around the region take part with a few of the teams travelling from outside of the area to play a few games of hockey for a good cause.

"This year we had 14 teams that's up from 11 teams last year," said chairperson Mike DeLaat. "There's seven women and me.

We're the organizing committee for the tournament. We've raised \$510,000 for the hospital, over \$30,000 for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, \$25,000 for Honeywood Minor hockey, and donated to various other charities."

That's almost \$600,000 the tournament has raised over all in those 11 years.

The funds are donated to the Headwaters Healthcare Foundation and are "directed to cancer care - what ever their greatest need is in cancer care," Mr. DeLaat explained. "Now that they've got the new wing built, if they need supplies, furniture it's for those things that the ministry doesn't supply but are supplied by the Foundation. It's for the care of the patients here. That's what we're about to make it better for our local hospital."

The Health Care Foundation was pleasantly shocked to see how much this year's donation amounted to.

"We knew they were about \$55,000 away from the \$500,000 mark. This is the highest amount they've ever donated. For us, this put them over half-a-million dollars giving specifically to the oncology department here," said Nicole Hand, manager of annual giving at the Foundation.

"It's amazing the way the community comes together. We try to figure out what we can do to create interest in the hospital it happens organically. This group of women are from the area. It all goes to our oncology department. The oncology department provides a number of things there's diagnosis, there's treatment, there's surgical. Every step of the way were people with cancer need to be cared for that's the oncology department."

About 220 women took part in this year's on-ice tournament, with more taking other non-playing roles in the event.