

Together, We're Reaching New Heights

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT



RIH Anesthesiology Team
Photo by Jason McVicar & Paul Campsall.

A DEPARTING MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

To sum up the past three years as Board Chair of the Royal Inland Hospital (RIH) Foundation feels nearly impossible. How do you capture the depth of pride or the feeling of gratitude that comes with every conversation, every donation, every act of care I've witnessed?

There are chapters in our lives that shape not just what we do, but who we are. It has been one of the greatest honours of my life to stand alongside this remarkable community. If there is one thing I have learned, it's that when our community comes together, there are no limits to what we can achieve.

I'm proud to say that healthcare in our region is evolving and together we are driving that transformation. With your support, we have expanded and revitalized critical hospital spaces. Together, with donations from our community we built the nine-story Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Tower from the ground up, opened our own Ronald McDonald Family Room, renovated the Afternoon Auxiliary Post-Anesthetic Recovery Unit, opened the Art & Norma James Pediatric Department, and many other essential areas. At the same time, we've created dedicated spaces where future healthcare professionals can rest, study, and thrive. We also launched RIH's first-ever Research Department, paving the way for groundbreaking medical discoveries. This is what progress looks like: tangible, lasting change, driven by people who care deeply.

As we continue to modernize care at RIH, we are shaping a hospital where the best and brightest in medicine are proud to work and where patients feel the utmost confidence in the care they receive. We have made incredible strides, but our work is far from over. Healthcare never stands still, and neither can we. As our population grows, so do the demands on our hospital. Equipment must continually be replaced, and new technologies must be embraced. Our goal isn't just to meet the standard of care, we must take part in defining it.

That's why we are leading the next wave of transformation at RIH: advancing medical imaging, surgical innovation, and revitalizing more patient-care spaces. At the same time, we remain committed to investing in the recruitment and retention of skilled healthcare professionals, a mission I hold close to my heart. During my tenure, over fifteen new specialists have joined our hospital and community.

As a business owner and lifelong Kamloops resident, I've always believed that our greatest responsibility is to care for the place we call home. Serving as Board Chair has only deepened that belief. As I pass this role on to new and capable hands, my heart is full. This isn't goodbye, it's an invitation to keep pushing boundaries, to keep building a legacy of excellence, and to keep reaching new heights in local healthcare.

To every donor, volunteer, and partner, thank you. Thank you for trusting us with your generosity and for showing up when it matters most. You are the reason this hospital can grow, adapt, and meet every new challenge with strength and resilience.

Thank you to the incredible board members I've had the pleasure of working alongside. Your ideas, dedication, and teamwork have been essential to everything we've accomplished together. To the amazing RIH Foundation staff, led by Heidi, thank you for your endless support, thoughtful preparation, and for always making me look good. It has been a true joy.

Look at what we have achieved. Together, we have come so far.

With sincere gratitude,



Dino Bernardo
Dino Bernardo
RIH Foundation Board Chair



A MESSAGE FROM ROYAL INLAND HOSPITAL LEADERSHIP

You will often hear the RIH Foundation say: "Together, we care." This simple yet powerful phrase reflects the connection between Royal Inland Hospital, the RIH Foundation, and the community we serve. We always strive to deliver the best healthcare possible, and it's the synergy between us that makes this happen. We want to thank the team at the RIH Foundation for being a big part of our family.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the physicians and healthcare professionals at RIH who make a difference every day. Their work is supported by the generous donors of the RIH Foundation, whose contributions fund vital equipment, uplift staff morale, and enhance the daily experience for patients and families alike. There is strength in every donation.

To RIH's dedicated community of supporters, thank you. Your positive impact is appreciated more than words can truly convey.

Sincerely,



Gerry Desilets
Royal Inland Hospital,
Executive Director of Clinical Operations

Dr. Elizabeth Parfitt
Royal Inland Hospital,
Chief of Staff

2024 - 2025 Board of Directors

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Care You Can Count On

When Eric Opel and his wife, Caroll, moved to Kamloops from the United States in June of 2024, they were excited for a new adventure. For Caroll, this was a homecoming. She had secured a director role at Royal Inland Hospital, a place she held close to her heart. This was not only the hospital where she was born but also where she initially trained as a nurse, jump-starting her highly rewarding career. Little did Caroll and Eric know that life-changing events were about to unfold within the walls of this hospital, giving them a profound appreciation for Canadian healthcare and the team of medical professionals who were about to touch their lives in ways they could never have imagined.

On October 16th, 2024, Eric's day started like any other. But as the hours passed, he felt increasing discomfort in his stomach, accompanied by intense sweating. By evening, he seemed to be improving until suddenly, he collapsed. Caroll's nursing instincts took over, and she jumped into action, assessing his condition while their daughters, Deore and Lia, called 911.

Paramedics arrived within minutes and quickly recognized the urgency of the situation. Eric's blood pressure was dangerously low, and he was slipping in and out of consciousness. A computed tomography (CT) scan revealed that he had suffered a ruptured mesenteric pseudoaneurysm, resulting in life-threatening internal bleeding within his abdominal cavity. The only chance of saving him was to stop the bleeding and get him into emergency surgery as soon as possible.

The nurses and staff in the Teck Emergency Department worked tirelessly, administering blood transfusions and stabilizing him for transport. Within hours, Eric was airlifted to Vancouver General Hospital, with Caroll by his side. Waiting ambulances rushed him straight into surgery, where specialists worked to repair the rupture and save his life. The procedure was a success, but Eric's journey was far from over.

Over the next 37 days, he faced one challenge after another, including: complications from surgery, a battle with COVID-induced pneumonia, and even a pulmonary embolism. Through it all, he never faced it alone. The compassionate and highly skilled teams at Vancouver General Hospital and Royal Inland Hospital stood by him and his family every step of the way.

After 10 days in Vancouver, Eric was strong enough to return to Kamloops, where he continued his recovery at



“We hear so much about the challenges in healthcare, but I have seen the best of it. When you walk into Royal Inland Hospital needing help, you will get it. We are here today because of the remarkable people who saved Eric’s life.”

Royal Inland Hospital. The care he received was nothing short of extraordinary. In addition to expert medical treatment, Eric's care team took a family-centric approach, ensuring that Caroll was involved in every decision. When she couldn't be at his bedside, Dr. Brar, Eric's hospitalist, would even FaceTime her to keep her updated. Nurses, medical students, and support staff all went above and beyond in the delivery of his care. During a difficult night when Eric was experiencing anxiety, a nurse offered to do her charting by his bedside so she could stay with him, providing comfort and reassurance.



During their time in hospital, Caroll and Eric truly came to appreciate the strength of Canada's healthcare system. Having spent years navigating the complexities of an insurance-driven model in the United States, they saw firsthand how care in Canada is delivered with compassion, without hesitation, and without financial barriers.

The day Eric was discharged was unforgettable. As he and Caroll walked out of 6 south, the staff who had diligently

cared for him during his recovery gathered to cheer them on as they departed.

With each passing day, Eric grows stronger, and his family's gratitude deepens. Looking back, Caroll knows there is no way to truly express the depth of their appreciation. “We hear so much about the challenges in healthcare, but I have seen the best of it. When you walk into Royal Inland Hospital needing help, you will get it. We are here today because of the remarkable people who saved Eric's life.”

“To ALL the doctors, especially, Dr. Kanwal Brar, Dr. Sandhar Gurpreet, Dr. Remy Wong and Dr. Shawn Pun, to ALL the nurses in the intensive care unit (ICU), the Teck Emergency Department, on the 8th floor of the Phil and Jennie Gagliardi Tower and 6 south, the amazing porters, dietitians, and every member of the healthcare team - *you all know who you are* - you gave us more time together, more moments to cherish, and a lifetime of gratitude. Thank you.”



EVENTS: COMMUNITY IN ACTION

Coming Together for Cancer Care: Colombo Lodge Reaches \$100,000 Fundraising Goal

For over a century, the Italian Cultural Centre, Colombo Lodge, has been a vital part of our community. Since 1914, this volunteer-driven group has dedicated itself to giving back, raising over \$4 million to support local charities, educational scholarships, and relief efforts both near and far through their *Colombo Cares* initiative.

In 2019, they made a bold five-year commitment to the RIH Foundation to raise \$100,000 in support of local cancer care. With cancer touching the lives of so many, including members of the Lodge, this was a deeply personal choice. Their goal was to bring the community together through an annual Spring Fling Banquet but



just as they were preparing to launch their first event, the pandemic hit.

Instead of putting their plans on hold, they leaned into their community spirit. Volunteers prepared and delivered takeout meals to 2,000 healthcare workers and first responders in Kamloops, a sincere gesture of kindness during an uncertain time. They also kickstarted their fundraising through creative drive-thru dinners, raising \$5,000 in the early days. As in-person gatherings returned,



the first Spring Fling Banquet made its debut in 2023, quickly becoming one of Kamloops' most anticipated annual events. The first two years brought in an impressive \$55,000. With excitement at an all time high, the sold-out event on April 26th, 2025, reached new heights. The evening raised an astounding \$40,000, bringing their total to \$100,000 and fulfilling their pledge in full!

There are no words to express how much the RIH Foundation appreciates the Colombo Lodge for their resource-



fulness, generosity, and community leadership. You've created a cherished event that brings people together and leaves lasting memories. More than that, you've given our community the chance to be part of something deeply meaningful. Your impact will be felt for years to come.

Thank you to all of the community supporters and Spring Fling sponsors who made this success possible!

The South Central Trucking & Industry Charity Golf Tournament Hits the \$3 Million Mark!

On May 23rd, 2025, the South Central Trucking & Industry (SCT&I) Charity Golf Tournament celebrated its 28th year, and what a celebration it was. Fueled by the loyalty

of our dedicated committee, the energy of our players, and the overwhelming generosity of our sponsors, we raised \$157,407 in support of recruitment and retention at RIH. That brings our total raised since 1997 to over \$3 million! Year after year our tournament supporters show up in full force and it never goes unnoticed. We're proud, we're grateful, and we are counting down the days until tee-off next year.



Scan here to watch long time SCT&I supporter Rob James' reason for giving. It's a story worth watching:



11th Annual Radiothon Breaks Records!

The RIH Foundation's 11th Annual Radiothon on March 6th, 2025, was a day we will never forget! Presented by Sun Country Toyota and broadcast live on B-100, the event raised an astounding \$650,673 in just 12 hours. This record-breaking achievement was made possible thanks to the generosity of our community, the enthusiastic support of our sponsors, and an incredible **\$200,000 matching gift from Jim Pattison.**



Community Events (January 1st - December 31st, 2024)

- Arrow Reload Golf Tournament
- Charged for Change: Fiat 500E Auto Lotto
- Coast Kamloops Hotel & Conference Centre Uptown Chef's Catering + Events - Romeos Kitchen + Spirits - Breakfast with Santa
- Colombo Lodge Italian Cultural Centre Spring Fling
- Evening of Giving
- Guru Nanak Fund
- Halston Esso Go-Karting for Care: Go-Kart Raffle
- Hot Nite in the City
- ICCHA/Wish Fund
- K97.5 Classic Rock Toys For Kids Breakfast
- Kamloops Blazers Teddy Bear Toss
- Kamloops Insurance Brokers Association Golf Tournament
- Kamloops Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 913 Calendar Sales
- Kamloops Street Rod Association
- Norkam Medical Club Bake Sale
- Sa-Hali Secondary Spike Pink Volleyball Tournament
- Signature Signs Ltd. Texas Hold'em Charity Poker Tournament
- South Sa-Hali Elementary School Bake Sale
- Teck Highland Valley Copper Fundraising Events - Mining for Miracles
- Tobiano's Breakfast Sidewalk Santa Fundraiser
- Women of Insurance Banquet
- Women Who Care Fundraiser Event

RIH Foundation Signature Events

- Radiothon
- Royal Affair
- South Central Trucking & Industry Charity Golf Tournament

THE AFTERNOON & EVENING AUXILIARY

Why We Volunteer

Volunteering is an act of kindness that starts with the simple desire to help others. For the Afternoon and Evening Auxiliaries, that desire has grown into decades of service supporting Royal Inland Hospital, dedicating thousands of hours and raising millions to benefit local healthcare.

Afternoon Auxiliary - Calling All Volunteers!



"After 65 years living in my home-town of Princeton, I moved to Kamloops, where my daughter and her family live. Once I got settled, I wondered how I was going to meet people my age. Someone mentioned the hospital Auxiliary to me, so I went and filled out an application form in 2015. Within a day, I got a call for an interview, which I was very happy to receive. I was assigned to the RIH Gift Shop, and I still do one shift a week to this day. I have made numerous friends in the 10 years since, and I would encourage anyone to look into the Auxiliary for a great volunteering experience and a way to make friends." – Charlene Longdo



"I volunteer for the social interaction, and getting to know all the other volunteers at the Thrift Seller. I have volunteered here for 15 years." – Barry Baskin



"My mom volunteered and I wanted to carry on her legacy, after she passed away. A friend reached out to say the hospital was looking for volunteers, so I joined the Afternoon Auxiliary. I enjoy meeting new people at my weekly shift at the RIH Gift Shop!" – Lynn Sunderman

If you've ever wanted to make an impact and meet wonderful people along the way, this is your opportunity to join something truly special. To inquire about joining, please contact: rihvolunteerservices@interiorhealth.ca.

Yet along the way, their members have discovered the true magic that lies within their work: it's the friendships formed, the purpose found, and the pure joy of being part of something bigger than yourself.

While these dedicated members give their time to touch lives in a meaningful way, they often say the experience gives them something back: connection, confidence, and a deep sense of meaning.



Evening Auxiliary

"I joined the Evening Auxiliary in 1983 as a young mother with a two-year-old. In 1985, I joined the Executive, taking on numerous roles and spending many years representing the Evening Auxiliary as President. Over the past 42 years, I've made many close and lasting friendships. This is a truly remarkable group, and I'm so proud to be part of such an amazing organization." – Jenny Quince

"I joined the Evening Auxiliary in 2008 after a friend invited me, and it felt like a natural fit. After working at the hospital for many years, I wanted to give back in a meaningful way. Volunteering with the Evening Auxiliary has been both fun and rewarding." – Wilma Scheer

"I joined in February 1966, after being encouraged by a friend who was already a member. I quickly found a group of like-minded women who not only wanted to make a difference in the community but also knew how to have fun doing it. The membership is kind, caring, and incredibly supportive—it truly feels like one big family." – Ambo Dhaliwal

MADE POSSIBLE BY A \$1 MILLION GIFT FROM RAE NIXON AND HER FAMILY

Sanctuary of Comfort: Introducing the Ronald McDonald Family Room at RIH

On June 13th, 2025, the RIH Foundation, together with Ronald McDonald House BC and Yukon and Interior Health, proudly opened the Ronald McDonald Family Room at Royal Inland Hospital: a space dedicated to keeping families close during some of life's most difficult moments.

This long-held dream only exists thanks to an extraordinary \$1 million gift from Rae Nixon, given in memory of her husband Dr. Lloyd Nixon, a beloved Kamloops physician who cared for three generations of local families. Inspired by her own childhood experience of being hospitalized alone, Rae dreamed of creating a safe, welcoming place where no child would feel scared, and no family would feel far from their loved one.

Located just steps from the Rita C. Mercier Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Art & Norma James Pediatric Department, and the Evening Auxiliary to the RIH Obstetrical Services Unit, this 1,100-square-foot space offers:

- > A comfortable living room for rest and connection
- > In-house washer and dryer
- > A play area for young patients and siblings
- > A fully equipped kitchen and dining space
- > A quiet space for reflection or private conversations



Working with Rae and her family to bring this vision to life has been a true privilege. Her generosity is a powerful reminder of the good that grows when kindness leads the way.



Scan to watch Rae's inspiring video and learn more about the profound impact of her gift.



The Ronald McDonald Family Room at Royal Inland Hospital exists today because of the generosity of our community. We are deeply grateful to everyone who made this possible.

CLOSER TO HOME

How Monthly Giving Helps Bring Specialized Care to Kamloops

When Kristina and Daniel Grondzil became monthly donors to the Royal Inland Hospital Foundation in 2018, they were guided by a simple truth: healthcare touches everyone. Having been born and raised in Kamloops, and now raising their two children here, they believed that supporting our local hospital was one of the most meaningful ways to care for their community. They had no way of knowing that years later, one of their children would need access to a pediatric neurologist and that their monthly contributions would help bring that care closer to home.



Like many other parents, Kristina and Daniel's world changed when their child received an unexpected diagnosis. Thankfully they had been referred to Dr. Breanna Clive, a pediatrician at RIH who became a pivotal figure in their care journey. She not only helped the Grondzils find answers but also went above and beyond to connect them with specialists across the province. These appointments meant travelling to Vernon, Kelowna and even Vancouver, often on short notice. With another child at home and full-time jobs, the need to travel outside of Kamloops added stress to a time that was already overwhelming and filled with uncertainty and endless questions.

Then one day, Dr. Clive delivered long-awaited news: a specialist they needed was coming to see patients right here in Kamloops. That specialist was Pediatric Neurologist, Dr. Torin Glass. For the Grondzils, it felt like a weight had been lifted. They no longer had to pack bags for an overnight stay, rearrange schedules, or worry about days off work.



The Grondzils explain, "Dr. Glass addressed so many of our unanswered questions. He listened with such empathy and explained things in a way no one else had. We genuinely felt heard and understood. We are truly thankful to him for taking time from his practice in the Lower Mainland, allowing us and many other families to access needed care without having to leave Kamloops."



"I knew families were travelling far to see me at my clinic in Burnaby. Being able to simplify that and offer care in their community means everything to me. It's one less burden for families already carrying a lot. The gratitude I see in parents when they realize they don't have to leave town is powerful."
—Dr. Torin Glass, Pediatric Neurologist

Dr. Glass, now runs an outreach clinic here in the Art & Norma James Pediatric Department at RIH. He plans to come 3-4 times a year, seeing as many patients as possible during each visit. From newborns to teens, his work spans a wide range of neurological conditions—from seizures, migraines, and brain injuries to developmental delays, neuromuscular disorders, and more. Dr. Glass also offers virtual follow-up appointments from his office in Burnaby, ensuring continuity of care for the children he sees in Kamloops. For families like the Grondzils, this hybrid model has been transformative.

When the opportunity arose to bring Dr. Glass to Kamloops, the RIH Foundation said yes immediately. We were able to do that thanks to the generosity of donors like the Grondzils. Monthly giving provides a dependable stream of funding that empowers the Foundation to respond quickly when new opportunities emerge, whether it's investing in life-saving equipment, funding innovative programs, or helping gain access to specialists like Dr. Glass. The RIH Foundation has proudly supported every aspect of making this outreach clinic a reality, helping to fund Dr. Glass' travel costs, expenses while visiting, and even administrative support. This behind-the-scenes investment ensures that when Dr. Glass arrives in Kamloops, he can focus entirely on what matters most: providing expert, compassionate care to children and families in our community.

"Kamloops has an excellent adult neurology group, but there was a clear gap in pediatric neurology," Dr. Glass shares. "I knew families were travelling far to see me at my clinic in Burnaby. Being able to simplify that and offer care in their community means everything to me. It's one less burden for families already carrying a lot. The gratitude I see in parents when they realize they don't have to leave town is powerful."

His connection to Kamloops runs deeper than medicine. A close friend and former medical school classmate, Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr. Jeffrey Poon, recently relocated here with his wife, Neurologist, Dr. Bessemer. In hearing about their positive experience working with RIH, Dr. Glass was inspired to explore the idea of offering his services here too. With family ties in the nearby rural community of Williams Lake, and a love for the outdoors, the opportunity felt like a perfect fit.

"I am honoured to be part of helping to improve access to care here," says Dr. Glass. "Thank you to the generous donors of the RIH Foundation for making this possible."

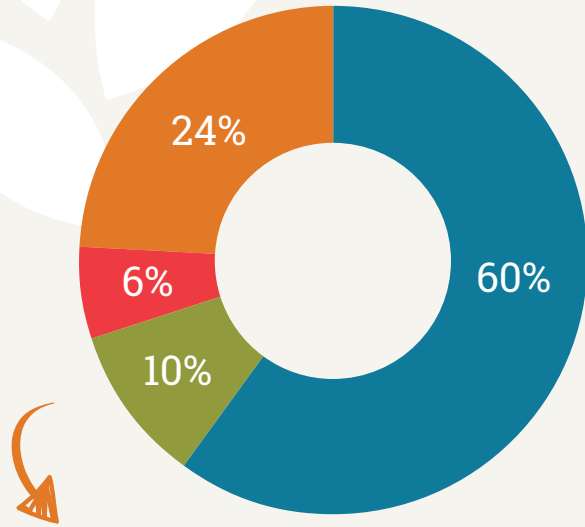
Monthly giving plays a critical role in the Foundation's ability to respond to needs as they arise. It provides reliable, sustainable funding that allows us to act quickly, invest wisely, and plan for the future. It is because of donors like the Grondzil family that we can embrace new opportunities and bring specialized care closer to home.

We are deeply grateful to every monthly donor who brings these possibilities to life. You are the quiet force behind some of the biggest changes in our hospital.

Interested in becoming a monthly donor? Become a Royal Ambassador and help drive meaningful change at Royal Inland Hospital. To sign up, scan the QR code here:



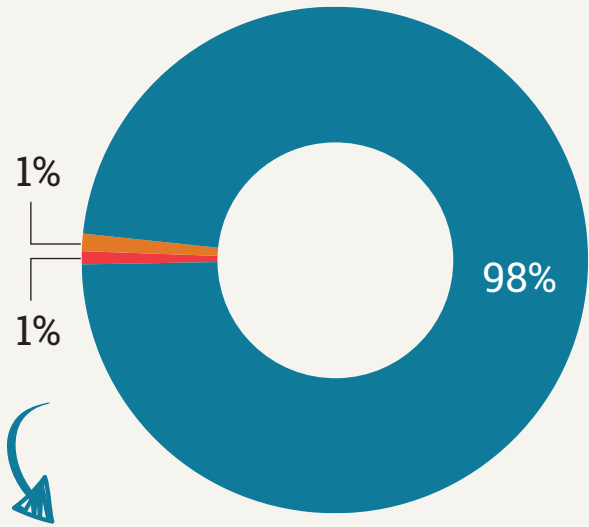
2024/2025 FINANCIAL SUMMARY



Total Revenue \$8,159,550

- Major Gifts – \$4,899,011
- Community Events* – \$1,961,414
- Legacy – \$818,840
- Annual Campaigns – \$480,285

**Includes-3rd Party Events, RIHF Events, In Hospital Fundraising, Memorials/Tributes & Catchment*



Total Disbursements \$7,567,600

- Equipment & Program Delivery – \$7,389,987
- Regional Health Centers – \$89,846
- Retention & Education – \$87,767

****Investment Income \$293,066**

***Prior to disbursement, your funds are securely invested. We only release payment for equipment once it has arrived, and for renovations once the space is in use. All gifts from wills and bequests are placed in a high-interest savings account to ensure they continue to grow until needed.*

Donor Analysis:

(April 1st, 2024 - March 31st, 2025):

- 652** New Donors!
- 1648** Retained Donors
- 72%** Donor Retention Rate

Education:

40 scholarships awarded valuing a total of \$28,810.

Recruitment & Retention at a Glance:

- > **602 Staff Gains** - Includes 332 from casual positions and 103 transferred from other Interior Health sites.
- > **5 RIH Foundation Housing Units** - Including a donated 4-plex and a 2-bedroom condo all within walking distance to RIH. We subsidise housing for visiting doctors and residents who are looking to practice at RIH and make Kamloops their new home.
- > **64 Medical Professionals Housed** - Medical professionals in areas such as: neurology, anesthesiology, obstetrics, pediatrics, cardiology, radiology, psychiatry, UBC residents and more!
- > **83 Nurses Hired by Interior Health (RNs/LPNs/Care Aides)** - With the RIH Foundation supporting retention initiatives and wellness.

A Gift Given With the Belief That Everyone Deserves to Heal



Ted and Maryanne Kowalsky have spent a lifetime building, with their hands, their hearts, and their values.

After moving from a small town in Saskatchewan to Kamloops in 1979, the Kowalskys worked hard to create a better life for their family, eventually building the highly respected custom cabinetry business, 7 Point Millworks & Installations. Grounded in the values of hard work, community spirit, and giving back, they never forgot where they came from or what it took to get where they are today.

Ted and Maryanne are the proud parents of two children, Lanette, a faculty member in the School of Nursing at Thompson Rivers University and Bryce, a volunteer medical first responder for St. John's Ambulance. Bryce was born with serious health complications that led to more than 20 surgeries before the age of 35. Each surgery brought a long, challenging road to recovery, spending countless hours in rehabilitation, first as a child learning to walk again and later as an adult determined to live a full independent life.

Royal Inland Hospital (RIH) and its rehabilitation team became a constant: a place of reassurance, hope and healing.

With deep gratitude for the care Bryce received, Ted and Maryanne made a remarkable donation of more than \$200,000 to the RIH Foundation in support of rehabilitation medicine over the past few years, a gift that has changed the landscape of care for countless others in our region.

Their gift helped fund the development of a physical medicine & ambulatory care clinic (PMACC), assist with upgrades to the rehabilitation department and help purchase many vital pieces of equipment necessary to deliver rehabilitation medicine.

The impact of their generosity is undeniable. "Their generosity allowed us to establish a true outpatient physical medicine and ambulatory care clinic—something we didn't have before," says Dr. Budiman-Steinley, Physiatrist at RIH. "It integrates care and allows me to work side-by-side with therapists. Without their support, we wouldn't have the equipment, the training environment, or the credibility to uphold RIH's status as a tertiary hospital."

Just recently, Dr. Budiman-Steinley presented Ted and Maryanne with a wish-list of equipment their department could only dream of acquiring this year. That dream has now become a reality because Ted and Maryanne have committed another \$100,000 to purchase every item on that list.

The Royal Inland Hospital Foundation has named both this rehabilitation clinic and a rehab patient room on the 7th floor of the Phil and Jennie Gagliardi Tower in honour of the Kowalsky's extraordinary gift. This is a lasting tribute to a family whose gift continues to restore mobility, dignity, and quality of life for so many.

Bryce, former volunteer and employee of New Life Mission and now an employee of *Happy Day Senior Services* and devoted volunteer with *St. John Ambulance*, is the living embodiment of that impact.



"He's a fighter," Ted says. "Despite all he's been through, his cup is always half

full. He never misses an opportunity to show up for others," explains Maryanne. "We just wanted to give people like him the care they need, right here at home."

Thank you, Kowalsky Family.

Scan here to see the impact their gift has made:



REMEMBERING JOE BUTLER

Never Forgetting Where He Started and Never Failing to Help Anyone in Need

Joe Butler never forgot where he came from and never stopped helping others get to where they needed to be.

Born in Rexton, New Brunswick, in 1939, Joe grew up with humble roots, one of many siblings in a household that knew hardship intimately. He often shared vivid stories of collecting bottles as a boy or the rare excitement of finding a full tube of baloney in the fridge. "We were just like the kids in Angela's Ashes," he would say. Those early experiences didn't harden him; they shaped him into a man who led with compassion, integrity, and understanding.

Joe's path took him to Ottawa, where he mastered his automotive skills and became the ultimate "car man." Eventually, he moved to Kamloops, where he met the love of his life, June. In 1975, with only two cars and a shared dream, Joe and June opened Butler Auto & RV Centre, a business built on quality, trust, and old-fashioned hard work. Over the decades, their business grew into a cornerstone of our community, while Joe and June's humility always stayed the same. Whether it was helping someone start their own business or quietly offering a hand to those struggling, Joe and June never hesitated to give back.

Joe may have had a gruff, no-nonsense exterior, but inside was a gigantic, gentle heart. When their son Glen was faced with cardiac complications, Joe and June were deeply moved by the care he received at Royal Inland Hospital. In 2017, they gave \$200,000 to support cardiac care, determined to ensure that other families could access the same level of life-saving support close to home. Another meaningful project was the Butler Community Garden on the North-shore where anyone could come and enjoy fresh organic vegetables. These gifts were made from a place of deep gratitude and love for their community.

In his final days, Joe found himself relying on the care of his family physician, Dr. Lawrie, and the incredible staff at Royal Inland Hospital and Kamloops Hospice. This time, his family was on the receiving end of the compassion he had spent a lifetime offering to others. Surrounded by the people he loved, Joe passed peacefully on June 27th, 2025.

Joe's legacy is more than a generous donation or a successful business. It's in the countless lives he quietly changed,



the deep and enduring love he shared with June, and the belief that no matter where you come from, you can always make a difference. The RIH Foundation is honoured to carry forward his spirit through the care his gifts continue to provide.

Joe Butler's name will not fade from memory. Humble, impactful, and deeply human, his life is a lasting reminder of how one life can touch so many.



Joe and June Butler

How do you want to be remembered?

*The RIH Foundation is here to help you
discover the legacy you want to leave.*

A legacy gift to the RIH Foundation can take many forms, and usually provides your estate with tax savings that may offset a significant portion of the charitable gift itself. Along with leaving a gift in your will, you can set up a charitable trust or name the RIH Foundation as a beneficiary on a registered investment account or life insurance policy. If you would like to learn more about supporting the RIH Foundation in your estate planning, ask your professional advisor or reach out to the RIH Foundation, today.

Legacy Donors

The following donors have confirmed a deferred gift to the RIH Foundation and are recognized here with our sincere gratitude:

Trudi & Lyle Backman
Dr. Rob Baker
Ed & Dianne Barker
Donna Chang
Harvey & Barbara Comazzetto
Craig & Sandy Cook
Lynne Gardner
Bruce & Susan Goddard
Dr. Maureen Leia-Stephen
Ken Lepin
Robin & Maureen MacDonald
Anthony Muzzillo & Evelina Coschizza

Dr. Lloyd H. & Rae Nixon
Gerald & Wendy Patrick
In Memory of Kelly
Gloria & Hubert Plante
Lorraine Romanin
Doug & Adhiel Rutledge
Audrey Saigeon
Dr. Jim Stephen
Lana & Murray Todd
Lynda Vankoughnett
Dr. Cornel & Hema Wijeyesinghe
Sharna & Jim Yates

OUR DONORS

Those Who Make it Possible:
Recognizing our Donors

Donors who gave \$1,000 or more between January 1st - December 31st, 2024, are recognized here with our sincerest thanks.

\$250,000+

Afternoon Auxiliary to the
Royal Inland Hospital
Gaglardi Family
Estate of Clint Hilliard
Teck Resources Limited

\$100,000-\$249,999

Estate of Joseph Abel
Ron & Eileen Bacon
Estate of Ray Dunsmore
Kelson Group
MacLoch Ranch
Guy Mercier Family
Nicola Valley Health Care Auxiliary
Estate of Lloyd Williams

\$50,000-\$99,999

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Royal Inland Hospital
Photo by Jason McVicar & Paul Campsall.

Acknowledgment:

The Royal Inland Hospital Foundation acknowledges that we are located on Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc territory, situated within the unceded ancestral lands of the Secwépemc Nation, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together. We are deeply grateful to the Indigenous communities in our region who graciously lend their support to the RIH Foundation and for those who have helped make our hospital a culturally diverse and inclusive place for all.

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