

Bethell Hospice raises \$154,000 through eighth-annual hike



Written By JASEN OBERMEYER

Bethell Hospice Foundation's 8th annual Hike for Bethell Hospice once again saw the organization not only reach their donation goal, but surpass it, raising \$154,000 to help the foundation to continue providing palliative care in the community.

The annual hike is the foundation's largest fundraising event, and saw over 400 people gather at the Lloyd Wilson Arena in Inglewood this past Sunday (May 6), including Caledon Mayor Allan Thompson, and other members of council, and coincides with National Hospice and Palliative Care Week. The annual hike has now raised a total of \$850,00.

"Support has been overwhelming," said Julie Hymers, Bethell Hospice's marketing and communications manager. "The community has been so supportive."

She told the Citizen that surpassing this year's goal is a testament to the community. "We feel so fortunate to have such strong support, and to have so many people come out to participate and help to raise funds for such a special place."

Government funding covers 60 per cent of the cost to operate Bethell Hospice, with the foundation needing to raise over a million dollars every year to keep their doors open. The 10-bed residence is the only registered hospice serving Caledon, Brampton, Dufferin County and West Woodbridge, and also offers community programs throughout Caledon and Brampton.

The event featured an accessible, five kilometre hike along the Caledon Trail-way, a memory board full of remembrances, a barbecue lunch prepared by the Caledon Lions Club, and a silent auction supported by local businesses.

Bethell Hospice Foundation co-chair, Tim Powell, thanked the large crowd for their generous support. "Each of you here today is aware how vital the services of Bethell Hospice are to our community," he said. "Each of you have cared enough to come forward today, to ensure that Bethell Hospice services will be here for the next families in need. Thank you all so much for your belief in the importance of Bethell Hospice in our community."

Bob Fines, a fellow board member, also spoke, thanking all the team involved. "Whether you are a first-time team or a returning team, a huge team or a small but mighty team, each of you is making a difference by being here with us today."

Ms. Hymers added that "there was such a positive energy" at the event, and grew when the announcement came that they reached their goal.

Donations will still be taken until June 30th for anyone looking to continue helping the foundation. Visit foundation.bethellhospice.org to donate.