

# MRI campaign: We've come a long way, baby



**Your Hospital**

Cindy Hughes

**D**rumroll please: I have some exciting news. Thanks to tremendous community support, an MRI will soon be a reality at Richmond Hospital. Together we've raised over \$3.8 million toward the \$4 million required to bring this machine to our hospital.

In 2007 when we launched our campaign to bring an MRI to Richmond, we knew that raising \$4 million would be no easy task. But we also knew that the community of Richmond was strong and you were

determined. Wait lists for MRI scans in Vancouver were unreasonable and an average of four people needing an MRI were turned away from Richmond Hospital each day.

What we didn't count on were the hundreds of wonderful and unexpected ways you pitched in to support this, our largest-ever campaign. When Milan and Maureen Ilich kicked things off with a \$1 million donation, we were off to a roaring start.

Following that leadership we saw Richmond residents from all walks of life contributing in all sorts of ways.

Take young Sophie O'Bray, who changed the rules at birthday time and asked for donations to the MRI

campaign instead of gifts for herself. The feisty eight-year-old (born at Richmond Hospital, of course), marched over to the Richmond Hospital Foundation with her donation shortly after her birthday.

"I want to help people," she said simply.

Or how about Mable Choi, aka "The One Woman Fundraising Machine," who, armed with pledge forms and her hands-free phone, single-handedly called over 150 people and raised more than \$6,000 towards the MRI. Her efforts began when her son David had to wait 7 months for an MRI in Vancouver to find out if there were tumours in his brain.

"You won't understand the importance of an MRI until you need one," she says.

David eventually got his MRI and was given a clean bill of health.

"But still, I'm thinking all the time, where can I get more people?" Choi says with a laugh. "Every day when I work, when I clean up, I am thinking about the MRI. I'm going to try more. I call everyone, and so far only one person hasn't made a donation."

And remember the one-time \$100 Climate Action Credit that the provincial government sent out last year? Many of you forwarded that cheque directly over to the Richmond Hospital Foundation.

See Next Page

## Fundraiser set for June 5

From Page 26

"There's nothing environmentally friendly about sitting in a traffic jam, trying to drive out to Vancouver for an MRI," wrote one man, "which is why I'm forwarding my climate action money over to help us get our own MRI. It's about time and our city deserves it."

Support in all sizes has come pouring in over the last year, and it's incredibly inspiring to see what we can do as a community when we all pitch in. So, congratulations Richmond and on behalf of everyone at Richmond Hospital, thank you for your support.

The fine print: Our new machine will be a Siemens Magnetom Espree 1.5 Telsa open concept MRI, the first of its kind in the province. This model of MRI is specially designed to accommodate

larger adults and people who are claustrophobic. It will be Richmond's first-ever public MRI and we expect it to be installed by spring and operational by late fall. Stay tuned for more updates.

\*\*\*

P.S. – You are cordially invited to join us at our next exciting fundraiser: the second annual Cork, Canvas and Cuisine on June 5. Meet the juried artists and bid on artwork while enjoying more than 100 different wines and the cuisine of many local restaurants.

Tickets are \$50. Call 604-244-5252 or see [www.richmondhospitalfoundation.com](http://www.richmondhospitalfoundation.com)

---

*Cindy Hughes is with the Richmond Hospital Foundation. She writes about local hospital issues every month in The Review and can be reached at [cindy.hughes@vch.ca](mailto:cindy.hughes@vch.ca)*