

**2012 BRANTFORD - REDEFINING HOPE CAMPAIGN – MAJOR GIFT
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**‘Unsung heroes in our community’
- Brant News**

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Photo by J.P. Antonacci, Brant News

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BRANT NEWS

The lottery win that changed their lives gave Lorne and Elsie Hankinson the chance to touch countless others by sharing their newfound wealth.

The Brantford couple set up a charitable foundation after winning \$5 million in a 2004 Lotto 6-49 draw.

On Monday, Elsie Hankinson presented the St. Joseph’s Lifecare Foundation with its biggest donation to date, \$1 million toward a new 10-bed hospice that will be known as Hankinson House.

“When you think of a person’s final days, to be able to spend them in an atmosphere like this is marvelous,” said Elsie, who was named honorary chair of the hospice’s “Redefining Hope” fundraising campaign during a ceremony at the Stedman Community Hospice.

“The joy and honour that I feel today was equally shared by my dear husband, Lorne.”

Lorne passed away last May. Elsie said she and her husband enjoyed “62 years of real happiness” together that culminated in the unexpected chance to make a difference through their foundation.

The donation puts St. Joseph’s within \$1.2 million of its \$5 million fundraising target for the new hospice, which will include 10 private rooms, a therapeutic spa, full kitchens and living quarters for medical residents.

The current hospice building will host expanded day wellness programs and bereavement support.

Demand for hospice services is increasing, with the community outreach program providing pain and symptom management to 200 patients each month, up from 30 monthly visits in 2008.

Expansion was a risky decision for St. Joseph’s, since the foundation already must raise \$1.5 million annually to cover the hospice’s free programs and receives no government funding for capital projects like a new building.

But the community was willing to help.

“We certainly heard loud and clear that the community wants more hospice care,” said Olga Consorti, CEO of the St. Joseph’s Lifecare Foundation.

Consorti called the Hankinson Foundation donation “overwhelming.”

“We were thrilled and truly honoured and humbled that they would choose our charity for their gift,” Consorti said.

“Lorne and Elsie are among the unsung heroes in our community,” said St. Joseph’s Lifecare Foundation chair Bob Peeling. “Their gift will help change the landscape of end of life care in Brantford forever.”

“I know what it’s like to be in need,” Elsie said, explaining why she and Lorne chose to donate their winnings. “We decided to set up the foundation because in that way we felt we could be more useful to more people who really need it.”

With the fundraising campaign now at 75 per cent, Consorti is looking to the public to follow the Hankinsons’ example and help the hospice reach its goal. If each Brantford household donated \$32.38, Consorti said, construction on the new hospice could begin overnight.