

LIVING WELL

Stories of How Your Support Changes and Saves Lives

“The fact that other families are out there thinking about us and working for us is really powerful.”

~ Susan and Ron Wulf



THANKS TO YOU...

Ron and his family received the support that was right for them

If you were to meet Ron Wulf today, you might not believe that he's just been through surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy for an aggressive type of brain cancer. But the well-spoken grandfather of two insists that while it may not be obvious to others, the cognitive impacts of his treatment have been a big challenge.

Ron learned he had glioblastoma multiforme last summer, and began his treatments with surgery

in the fall. At that time, Ron and his wife Susan also welcomed their daughter and her family to move in and help out while Ron recovered. “We’re like a big blended family now, all living together,” Ron says. “It’s me, my wife, my daughter and son-in-law, and their two kids, Rosemary and CJ.”

But 11-year-old Rosemary and 5-year-old CJ had a hard time watching their grandfather go through

Read more of the Wulf story on page 2

Thanks To You

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Ron, seen here in Costa Rica, used to speak seven languages. Thanks to you, he had a Cancer Coach to help him cope with the cognitive impact of his glioblastoma treatments.

something so serious. Susan remembers realizing Rosemary could use a bit of outside support the day she came downstairs and asked, "Is grandpa going to die?"

"With glioblastoma, it's not really a question of *if* it's going to come back...it's more a question of when," Ron explains. "So naturally, that was really tough on the kids."

Ron's oncologist, Dr. Garth Nicholas, recommended that Ron connect with a Cancer Coach at the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation. **Both Ron and his daughter began working with a Coach to help them cope with the challenges of cancer.** There they learned there was a special program available for Rosemary and CJ called CLIMB™ (Children's Lives Include Moments of Bravery).

The six week group Coaching program helps children learn how to cope with and express the difficult feelings that might surround a loved one's cancer diagnosis. "Putting all those kids together was huge," Ron says. "It let them be part of things and understand things at their own level."

Rosemary liked that she could share how she was feeling in a place where everyone else understood. "I like that I made friends, and we could all be together and have fun," she says. "I got a break from cancer, and the Coaches made me feel safe and good about everything."

Rosemary also says CLIMB™ helped her learn more about cancer in general. "I understand what's happening to grandpa now, so I'm not as scared."

Ron adds, "My grandkids feeling better helps me feel better. It helps me hang in there and heal."

As for Ron's own Coaching experience, "It helped me refocus and find purpose again. Coaching helped me get back to just getting on with things."

Today, while Ron admits it's been hard to stay idle as he heals, he enjoys having the grandkids around to help him feel productive. "It's good for my rehab to help them with school and other things," he says. "I used to teach, so it's a good fit."

"I found Coaching absolutely wonderful, well worth every minute of it."

~Ron Wulf

Thanks to you, Ron and his family received the support that was right for each of them. "The fact that other families are out there thinking about us and working for us is really powerful. The idea that somebody who doesn't know me is trying to help with this, makes me want to push on as well."





Report to Community - Celebrating 25 Years

Since the founding of the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation in 1995, YOU have given so much hope by supporting local research, clinical trials, and Cancer Coaching.

We are so proud of our community for raising more than

\$42 million in these 25 years for life-saving research and local clinical trials.

These incredible accomplishments include:

- Assisting in the purchase of the **CyberKnife, a targeted radiotherapy tool that can reduce side effects and improve the efficacy of radiation therapy**, at The Ottawa Hospital.
- Supporting Dr. John Bell and his team in their ground-breaking work with **oncolytic viruses and Car-T therapy**.
- Helping Dr. John Sinclair fund the purchase of the **5-ALA drug for fluorescence guided surgery**, to give brain cancer patients better surgical outcomes.
- Investing in Dr. Shawn Malone's **SPARTAN clinical trials, which have shown improved survival rates** for prostate cancer patients.

And, you have helped raise more than

\$13.5 million to support families through Cancer Coaching.

That includes:

- Launching Canada's first-ever **Cancer Coaching service in 2011**.
- Empowering **4,074 families facing cancer** to take control of their wellbeing.
- Offering more than **12,000 hours** of one-on-one support.
- Helping families from a distance through the online **NexJ Coaching platform**.

As we reflect on the history of your generosity, we can't help but highlight the outstanding support you have given during these unprecedented times.

This March, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw:

- **A 50% increase** in demand for Cancer Coaching.
- **More than half** of cancer patients reporting that they had treatments or surgeries cancelled.
- **Four-in-ten patients** reporting that their clinical trials were being put on hold or stopped altogether.

We asked for your help, and you stepped up! You opened your heart and gave to support local families facing cancer when they needed it most. Donors gave an incredible **\$56,030** to help our loved ones in a time of crisis. It was inspiring to see such generosity, and we can't thank you enough!

You have accomplished some truly incredible things. The work done this year and over the last 25 years has changed cancer care for the better, and we are so grateful for the researchers, doctors, nurses, health administrators, and Cancer Coaches who have been on the frontlines of it all.

But most importantly, we want to thank YOU, and all our donors, for making this possible.

THANK YOU!

Can We Help Our Own Bodies Fight Cancer?

Local researchers focus on teaching the body's immune system to recognize cancer as a threat

Over the past 25 years, you have helped the Cancer Foundation grant significant funds towards local research projects and clinical trials. But these grants haven't only helped patients have access to better treatments – they've created vital building blocks for the future of cancer research!

One area local researchers are focusing on right now is an approach called immunotherapy.

"My lab and labs around the world have been asking; can we help our own bodies fight the cancer?" says Dr. John Bell, senior scientist at The Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. "Maybe the immune system can be programmed to attack cancer, just like it would

an infection. This has really taken over the scientific world in cancer research, and has led to some incredible developments."

Immunotherapy includes treatments like checkpoint inhibitors, oncolytic virus therapy, T-cell therapy, and cancer vaccines. They attempt to teach the immune system to recognize cancer cells as foreign invaders, so that the immune system takes action and destroys them while leaving healthy cells alone. While this approach doesn't work for every patient, studies offer valuable insight and have created breakthroughs in very difficult-to-treat cancers.

"We've got a long way to go, but some people are having great

"Immunotherapy has really taken over the scientific world in cancer research, and has led to some incredible developments."



Dr. John Bell, Senior Scientist, Cancer Therapeutics Program, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute

responses," Dr. Bell says. "We've worked hard for the last several decades to get that therapy going here in Ottawa, and I'm proud of the things we've done to make that happen."



I grew up in Newfoundland and Labrador, where my loved ones and neighbours were always looking out for one another. Even for strangers, their kindness knew no limits – whether it was cooking someone a meal in their time of need or simply offering comfort, we all had a commitment to making sure no one had to face any of their struggles alone.

Does that sound familiar? I hope so, because this is quite similar to what you have done for our community as a supporter of the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation.

Today, I'd like to thank you for your kindness.

A message from our new President & CEO

Each day since I joined the Cancer Foundation, I've witnessed donors like you stepping in to help. We've all experienced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in some way this year – it has impacted our work, our finances, our loved ones, and everything in between – and it has been even more challenging for those who are facing cancer. Yet every day, donors are calling to ask if they can drop off a donation, if their business can support us, or if they can volunteer their help.

While I'm grateful to be joining the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation as its new President and CEO, I'm even more grateful for your support: this organization could not continue on without people like you. Cancer has affected all of our lives, and we

rely 100% on donations from the community to make sure the best care is available here in Ottawa. **When we invest in local cancer care we truly are investing in our community's future, and YOU are making this possible.**

Year after year, the generosity of my community back in Newfoundland and Labrador has continued to inspire me. I can already tell that yours will do the same.

I hope we can work together for many years to come in support of lifesaving research, clinical trials, and services like Cancer Coaching.

Thank you!

Sincerely,
Michael Maidment
President and CEO
Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation

