

# Connections

A newsletter for donors and friends of **niagarahealth**  
—  foundation



SPRING | 2022



Beth and her family

## “No one needs to carry the whole thing on their shoulders”

Beth Winterbottom has been a patient for some time.

In 2005, Beth had her left knee replaced. In 2006, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Thankfully, it was caught early, and she had the lump removed. She then went through five weeks of radiation at Juravinski Hospital. “I am a very independent person. I would drive myself to each appointment. In those days, the drive from Niagara to Hamilton was long. As a mother of nine children, I didn’t want the family to know or worry, so I did it all by myself,” Beth recalled. In 2007, she had her second knee replacement.

“Those were a rough three years. Any hospital experience is scary,” said Beth.

In March 2020, Beth sensed and worried that her cancer had returned even before her upcoming diagnosis appointment, and her fears were confirmed. To add to the stress of her new fight, COVID-19 emerged and changed everything. It took Beth longer than expected to get a mammogram appointment. Finally, in mid-December 2020, Beth was informed that her appointment would be on January 20th, 2021. “I considered that the best Christmas present ever!” said Beth.

The following month, the results from the mammogram screening and a biopsy confirmed that the breast cancer had returned. This time, it was more aggressive and required immediate treatment.

Follow up to an appointment with the surgeon, the Walker Family Cancer team immediately put a plan into action, and her chemotherapy (chemo) treatment was mapped out.

**“I was so weak and tired at this point, but thought it was time to regain my strength and recover from all this,” said Beth.**

This time for Beth, her treatment journey was an eye-opener. She wanted to do this on her own again. She had undergone surgery and radiation in the past but had never had chemo. She had never experienced the side effects and the toll it would take on her body. It was not like her past treatments at all. “They try



to prepare you, but you never have a clue what you're in for. It's really life-changing," said Beth.

Beth went through 16 weeks of chemo treatments, which ended on September 16th, 2021. She was unable to be as independent during this treatment as she was during the last. When she couldn't drive herself to the appointments, she realized that she could not do this alone.

"I was going to drive myself to my treatments, but I quickly found out that when you are doing chemo, you need help from others. You cannot do it by yourself. I was independent and hated to ask people for help. I was determined that I would drive back and forth to my appointments. **Today, I don't know what I would have done without my daughter, who became my sole caretaker. She took a leave of absence from her work and has now gone back to work. I gave up my independence. No one needs to carry the whole thing on their shoulders!**" stated Beth.

Along with the help from her daughter, Beth also relied on the team at the Walker Family Cancer Centre, especially her nurse Emily. "Emily was very nice, and we got to know each other. She was always upbeat and built up my confidence. She was there when I rang the gong on September 16th, 2021. I want to thank Emily, Dr. Janice Giesbrecht and all of the staff at the Walker Family Cancer Centre for all their support."

At Beth's follow-up appointment, on December 3rd, 2021, she was informed that she would require three weeks of radiation treatment for her cancer, starting in January 2022.

During one of her radiation sessions, the attending nurse noticed Beth seemed "off." Beth recalled finding it difficult to breathe at home and during her treatments. She was not scheduled for blood work until April 2022, but they sought immediate attention.

From there, Beth had to undergo a blood transfusion. It was not easy, but Beth is a warrior and made it through.

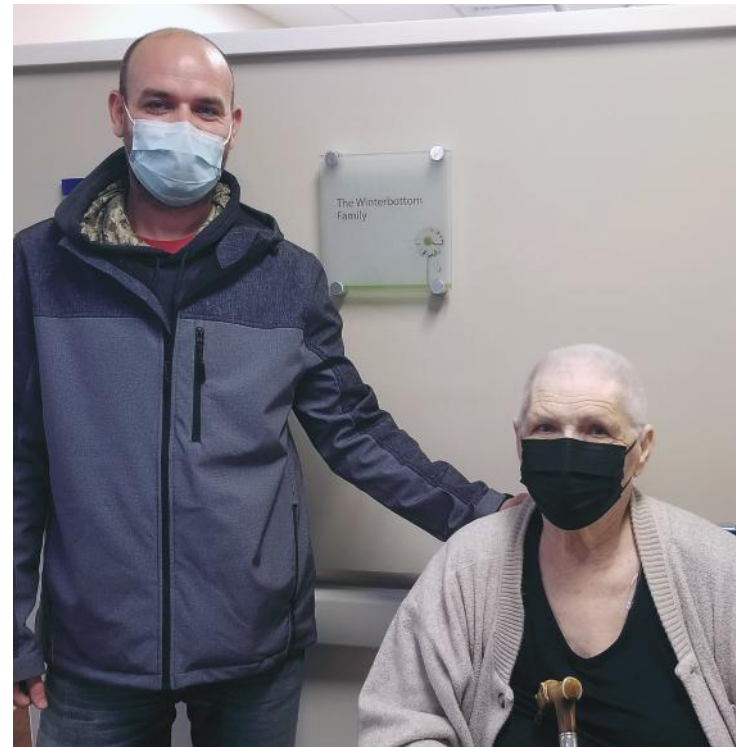
Today, Beth is thankful for all the help she received and appreciates all she has and so much more.

With Beth's daughter returning to work, Beth is now able to regain some of her independence including bringing her grandson to and from school.

**"My family reminds me to keep positive and use affirmation words, and not 'I hope', but 'I will.' I have big plans. I'll be ready," says Beth.**

In April, she will be returning to working evenings at Brock University.

## Honouring My Mother's Journey



On October 6th, 2021 Christopher Winterbottom, Beth's son, won the Ontario 49 top prize of \$2 million dollars. The first thing Chris wanted to do with his winnings was to give back. He first took his son's basketball team to Footlocker to give all the children a shopping spree. "I couldn't wait to see the look on their faces!" he smiled. "This win allowed me to brighten people's days with small acts of kindness."

The next way Chris gave back was to honour his mother's journey by making a generous donation to the Walker Family Cancer Centre through the Niagara Health Foundation. **"I wanted to have her name on a plaque so everyone can know how much of a warrior she is."**



Chris, Benjamin and Steph

## “Our lives forever changed” Welcoming Benjamin to our Family

On June 6th, 2021 around 1:00am, Steph woke up and realized her water had just broke. She alerted her husband Chris, who is a heavy sleeper and assumed it was a false alarm, and went right back to sleep.

She quickly woke him again and said, “My water broke. We need to get ready!” Chris then realized it was go-time. “With my wife being so well-organized, she had her bags all packed and ready to go while I was scrambling to throw things into an overnight bag. I was constantly asking questions like when is the baby coming? How quickly do we have to move, etc.?” said Chris. Steph reached out to Dr. Jessica Graham, who instructed them to make their way to the St. Catharines Site of Niagara Health. She would meet them there to check on her progress.

Upon arriving at the Emergency Department, Steph was checked in immediately. “Considering we were still dealing with COVID-19 restrictions and protocols, the process was seamless, and the staff were very helpful and supportive. Within a short time, we were wheeled up to the Labour and Delivery Unit and met the RN on call, who examined Steph,” recalls Chris. **“She answered my ‘hundreds’ of questions about the equipment, machines, process and much more. I was very curious as I had no idea what was going on.”**

Both Steph and Chris recall Cindy, the RN that joined them at 7:00am. “Cindy was great! She was so amazing, funny and made the day so much more relaxing for us,” said Chris. While Cindy performed the examination, Dr. Graham arrived to check on Steph and the soon-to-be-born baby. Dr. Graham informed them

that the baby was on its way. As they got closer to their baby's arrival, everything was going according to plan and Steph was doing well.

Around an hour before the baby arrived, Chris recalls, **"The coaching and motivation were incredible to watch; the Niagara Health team was amazing! Just when Steph thought she could not push anymore, they continued to encourage her with positivity and conviction."**

Finally, at 7:42pm on June 6th, Chris and Steph welcomed their healthy baby, Benjamin Robert Sinclair to the world. It was a great relief and joy for both Steph and Chris when they heard their son's first cry.

Both Steph and Chris began to burst out with tears of joy! **"I got to name our son and cut the cord, the coolest experience of my life! Steph held little Ben all bundled up, and our lives were forever changed."**

Chris and Steph quickly realized that as first-time parents, it does not matter how many parenting books they had read or what

their friends had told them; during the process, they still had questions and felt overwhelmed. They are so grateful for the support and care they received from the team at Niagara Health, and they could not imagine going through this process without them.

The next evening they received the great news that mom and Benjamin were ready to go home. To show appreciation to their Niagara Health team, they dropped off Tim Horton's gift cards at the nurse's station.

Chris' words of wisdom after experiencing the arrival of his son is **"surrender to the process and know you're in good hands with our healthcare system. The teams of professionals are well trained and care so much."**



## More Than Just a Bed

One of the most important factors in healing is proper rest and sleep. A hospital bed is designed with the right features to assist in this healing.

It is a connecting point for monitoring technology, and IVs patients need during their care. It is where patients take their meals; meet with their healthcare team, and welcome new family members.

The bed is a gathering place during our journey in healthcare where the patient could improve quality of life and gain a sense of independence. Providing each patient with a bed that is comfortable during their time in hospital is so important to their safety and healing.

We need your help to purchase urgently needed patient beds. Each of the new bed will cost an average of \$6,000.

Support this Niagara Health initiative by calling 905-323-FUND (3863) or visiting our website [NiagaraHealthFoundation.com](https://NiagaraHealthFoundation.com)





# KIDS

## Ultimate Challenge

### We're back!

Kids Ultimate Challenge is back, in-person, bigger and MUDDIER than ever!

On June 18th, we invite you to join hundreds of families at Burgoyne Woods by participating in the 10th annual Kids Ultimate Challenge. **Modelled after the popular mud run races, this event offers a unique experience geared to children aged 4 to 13.** The Kids Ultimate Challenge tests endurance, stamina, strength and agility while encouraging teamwork and community spirit!

### Mud, Sweat and Cheers!

With 12 obstacles to conquer, participants will get their heart rate up and adrenaline pumping as they climb over "Hay Mountain", crawl under netting and swing over mud pits to complete this exciting and fun filled obstacle course. Finally, the challengers will finish the course by running through a blast of cold water compliments of the St. Catharines Fire Department pumper truck.

Parents, grandparents, friends and family members are invited to come along and cheer on their little challengers. Along with the much-anticipated obstacle course, **the event will also feature a Fun Zone with games and activities for kids, a raffle, food trucks, vendors and our famous "Teddy Bear Clinic"** where their favourite stuffy can get a checkup from the Children's Health Unit team at Niagara Health – there is fun for the whole family.

All participants will receive a Kids Ultimate Challenge t-shirt, snack pack, access to the Fun Zone, and a commemorative medal honouring their achievement.

## Little, But Mighty

All proceeds from the Kids Ultimate Challenge will benefit the Children's Health Unit of Niagara Health. The Children's Unit is specially designed for our younger patients and their families. There are 24 beds, including three closed observation beds, two clinical decision unit beds for patients under assessment, and four rooms for child and adolescent mental health services.

During the weeks leading up to the event, Kids Ultimate Challenge participants are encouraged to collect donations for

their efforts in support of the Children's Health Unit. This is a great opportunity to teach our children & grandchildren about the power of philanthropy and supporting their community.

Since its inception, the **Kids Ultimate Challenge has raised over \$400,000 for the Children's Health Unit**. Past funds have been used to purchase vital equipment such as transcutaneous monitors, cardiac monitors and incubator transport stretchers.

All fundraisers will have an opportunity to win prizes. Incredible prize packages will be awarded to the top fundraisers.



## Are You Up For the Challenge?

**Date:** Saturday, June 18th, 2022

**Location:** Burgoyne Woods (St. Catharines)

**Participants:** Kids Aged 4-13

**Registration Fee:** \$35

**REGISTER TODAY**  
[KidsUltimateChallenge.com](http://KidsUltimateChallenge.com)





Ron Sack

## The Future of Healthcare is in Your Hands!

At age 96, Ron Sack was planning for the future and thinking about the legacy he would leave behind. His financial advisor recommended he look to support a charity. There are so many worthy causes in Niagara so it is never an easy decision to select a charity. Ron was inspired by Mr. Tom Rankin's letter in the local newspapers asking the community to support the purchase of a third MRI. The decision for Ron to designate to the Niagara Health Foundation in his Will was easy. He is honoured to have his legacy support local healthcare.

Niagara currently has two MRIs serving over 450,000 residents in the Niagara region. The campaign to fund a third MRI\* was a tremendous community wide success.

Ron shared his wife's experience with us, "My wife, Elfriede, suffered from extreme back pain, and she was in an incredible amount of discomfort. She needed an MRI, and in those days, the wait for an MRI scan was three months. We couldn't wait, so we considered alternative options and decided to go to the United States. We paid \$600 out of our pockets to have an MRI so that my wife could be diagnosed."



Ron came to Canada in 1957 from East Prussia with only \$33.00 in his pocket. Elfriede would soon join him. They settled in Toronto, and he worked for Continental Cannery Ltd. In 1963, the company relocated to Niagara and Ron and his wife became longtime residents of Chippawa.

**"Canada has been good to us. But, having no immediate family here and relatives in the United States and Germany, we wanted to give back to a good cause," said Ron.**

Elfriede passed away on October 10th, 2019, at the age of 89. Ron continues to live in Chippawa independently. He has kept safe during the pandemic and enjoys when he can be outdoors in warmer weather.

**"If you can, consider giving to the community you live in. Where you can get the care when you need it most."**

*\*This new MRI, the third for Niagara, will help reduce wait times for the community, which are currently 27 percent longer than the provincial average. It will also provide greater accuracy, giving patients better possible diagnoses, treatment and outcomes. Tom Rankin's quest for support was \$2.8 million for the new MRI at Niagara Health.*





## Leaving a Lasting Legacy

Remembering Niagara Health Foundation in your Will is an act that is generous, powerful, and surprisingly simple. A legacy gift allows you to leave a larger gift than what would be possible during your lifetime, while still taking care of your family, heirs and remaining in control of your assets during your lifetime.

Bequests can take the form of a property, securities, cash, or even a percentage of your estate.

Your estate will receive a charitable tax receipt that can lower or even eliminate your estate taxes. You also have the opportunity to honour or memorialize yourself or a loved one by naming a space in a Niagara Health facility or establishing a named endowment fund.

Leaving a gift to the Niagara Health Foundation in your Will is simple. First, talk it over with your family and loved ones, then speak to your lawyer about drafting or revisiting your Will or adding a codicil. You can also fill out our Planned Gift Information Form and submit it online for more information.

Every gift in every Will makes a difference and builds a secure future for extraordinary care in Niagara. For more information about leaving a legacy gift, please visit [LegacyNHF.com](https://www.LegacyNHF.com)

**Niagara Health Foundation is a proud partner with Will Power.**



You can make a difference with a gift in your Will to Niagara Health, while still taking care of those you love.

Even 1% of our estate can have an enormous impact on our local healthcare while still leaving 99% for your family and loved ones.

Visit [www.willpower.ca/legacy-calculator/](https://www.willpower.ca/legacy-calculator/) to see your potential impact.

*\*Artist rendering, subject to change*

# It's Our Future



## Help Support

### The Future of Healthcare in Niagara

The 1.3 million-square foot South Niagara Site on 50 acres at Biggar and Montrose Roads in Niagara Falls will be a cornerstone of health and healing that fosters a community of connected care and wellness.

The 10-storey, 469-bed hospital will modernize healthcare for all of Niagara.

With your support, you can help build a brighter future for our region.

### PLEGGED SUPPORT TO DATE

# \$20,756,130

## The South Niagara Site will advance and modernize healthcare in Niagara by:

- Offering specialized services in stroke, complex care, wellness and aging and geriatric psychiatry;
- Ensuring an older persons' focus in all aspects of care;
- Becoming the first WELL Certified healthcare facility in Canada, designed to incorporate elements that promote health and wellbeing for everyone who uses the facility and;
- Incorporating modern practices, equipment and technology into a state-of the art facility to attract the best and brightest healthcare professionals to Niagara.



It's Our Future

[ItsOurFuture.com](https://ItsOurFuture.com)



# Community Fundraisers

Our community is the heart and soul behind the Niagara Health Foundation. The funds raised through community events help us provide Niagara Health with state-of-the-art equipment for all our hospital sites. If you are interested in learning more about hosting a fundraising event please call 905-323-FUND (3863).



## SUNSET GRILL HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN

From December 20-26th, Sunset Grill - Fourth Ave ran a holiday campaign, with a portion of sales being donated back to Niagara Health – Urgent Needs. Even with new government restrictions, the campaign raised a total of \$1,100. We thank Sunset Grill - Fourth Ave for continuously being a strong supporter of Niagara Health.



## NPL MOVEMBER

During the month of November, employees at NPL Canada - Niagara participated in “NPL Movember” to raise funds for the Prostate Cancer Assessment Centre at Niagara Health. The team crushed their goal by raising \$6,000 in their first year of the campaign. Thank you to all participants and supporters - just amazing results.



## BROCK RUGBY

In October, the Brock University Men's and Women's Rugby teams hosted a fundraiser to honour their loved ones during Breast Cancer Awareness month. The teams wore pink shirts on game day and collected donations to raise \$1,100, which will go towards purchasing a chemo chair at Niagara Health. Thank you Brock Rugby for your support.

# Upcoming Events

## Virtual Rankin Cancer Run

*The month of May 2022*

Run alone or join a group of friends and complete a 1km or 5km run or walk and support a great cause.

Visit [rankincancerrun.com](http://rankincancerrun.com)

## Niagara Cycling Marathon

*June 6, 2022*

The 2nd annual Niagara Cycling Marathon is back. Riders will set out on a 120km ride through Niagara. This year's goal is to raise \$50,000.

Visit [niagaracyclingmarathon.com](http://niagaracyclingmarathon.com)

## Niagara Golf Marathon

*June 14, 2022*

Niagara Golf Marathon golfers will play 100 holes in 1 day while raising money for several Niagara charities.

Visit [niagaragolfmarathon.ca](http://niagaragolfmarathon.ca)

## Polo for Health

*August 25 to 28, 2022*

Bring your friends and family for a fun day of polo in support of the Children's Unit at Niagara Health.

Visit [Niagara Health Foundation's Community Events page](#)

## Big Move Cancer Ride

*September 11, 2022*

Join hundreds of cyclists as they take to the roads of Niagara. Riders will tackle 12km, 25km, 50km, or 75km routes in support of the Walker Family Cancer Centre

Visit [bigmovecanceride.com](http://bigmovecanceride.com)

**Thank you for your generous support!**

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**905-323-FUND (3863) | [foundation@niagarahealth.on.ca](mailto:foundation@niagarahealth.on.ca) | [NiagaraHealthFoundation.com](http://NiagaraHealthFoundation.com)**