

## Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund donates \$104,000 to District for medical equipment

Sixteen years ago, **Karen Hilburn** could not imagine she would be where she is now.

The Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund has grown from supporting breast and cervical cancer treatments for a few patients each year to becoming a thriving chapter of Mason General Hospital Foundation that is able to support treatment for a wide range of cancers that affect women.

Additionally, the Fund has supported other services, such as the 3D mammography machine at Mason General Hospital and the Hospital's Cancer Wellness support group with Harmony Hill Retreat Center.

Now, the Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund has stepped forward to donate over \$100,000 for much-needed medical equipment that will benefit Mason County women long-term.



**Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund Board Members: top row; Katie Arnold, Raeanne Myers, Ginger Brooks, Linda Cargill and Kelle Oblizalo; bottom row; Kathy Mix, Dr. Andrea Martin, Nancy Wright and Karen Hilburn. Not pictured: Michele Crow, Karen Anderson, Michelle Corral, Kathy Geist, Jan Olson, Jackie Rhodes and Marcia Rohlik. Photo by Arla Shephard Bull**

"Every year people give more to the fund than ever before," Hilburn said. "We are very fortunate. It's a wonderful thing to help acquire equipment that will save more lives."

With the help of Mason Health's **Dr. Andrea Martin**, MD, who also serves as a Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund board member, and **Nicole Eddins**, Senior Director of Ancillary Services, the Fund identified four pieces of equipment needed at Mason General Hospital.

The Hospital will purchase a stereotactic breast biopsy adapter for \$85,000, a hysteroscope for \$5,000, and two colposcopes for \$7,000 each.

"Currently, our radiologists perform breast biopsies by manual injections using our general ultrasound machines," Eddins said. "When there is calcification present, an ultrasound machine isn't able to pick up the image."

"Mason Health will now be able to perform these biopsies in-house, without having to refer patients to a facility in Olympia," Eddins continued. "The adapter connects to the Hospital's 3D mammography machine and ensures exact precision during biopsies."

If you do not wish to receive future fundraising requests to support the Foundation, please email us at [foundation@masongeneral.com](mailto:foundation@masongeneral.com). As an alternative, you may call our local number (360) 427-3623 or the toll-free number (855) 880-3201 ext. 28084 and leave a message identifying yourself, stating you no longer want to receive fundraising requests. We will honor your request not to receive any Mason General Hospital fundraising communications from us after the date we receive your decision.

The hysteroscope is a thin, illuminated tube used to examine the cervix to diagnose endometrial and uterine cancers, and a colposcope is a magnifying device used to examine the cervix, vagina and vulva when cancer screening tests show abnormal cell changes in the cervix.

The new pieces of equipment replace equipment that is outdated, Martin said.

"I've had my fair share of grumbling in the Operating Room when our hysteroscope wasn't doing what I wanted it to do," Martin added. "We need new ones. Our colposcope works, but it needs replacement. It can be a night and day difference when you use newer equipment."

Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund members feel fortunate to be able to help Mason County women in this way.

"For me, part of why I love being part of this Fund is keeping services local to Mason County," said **Kelle Oblizalo**. "I love that we can keep these types of scans local so people don't have to travel. It's so important."

The entire experience is very humbling, added **Ginger Brooks**.

"We are all volunteers," Brooks said. "Every bit of the money you're donating is helping local women in Mason County."

The Karen Hilburn Cancer Fund raises money through its signature Denim & Diamonds event, golf tournaments at Alderbrook Golf Club and LakeLand Village and the Tour de Mason Lake (see Save the Date). Learn more at [www.masongeneral.com/foundation/khcf](http://www.masongeneral.com/foundation/khcf). ■

## Centennial Guild honors charter member Kristi Armstrong



**Centennial Guild members Linda Shrum, Barb Smith, Patty Rhoades, Kim Keeler and Lisa Welander in front of the new television and virtual aquarium in the Emergency Department. Photo by Arla Shephard Bull**

Longtime Emergency Department Nurse **Kristi Armstrong** made a lasting impact on community members for more than 40 years.

As a charter member of the Centennial Guild, a chapter of the Mason General Hospital Foundation, Armstrong also worked to raise funds for Hospital equipment. After her sudden death in 2016, the Guild wanted to find a way to honor Armstrong.

Earlier this year, the Centennial Guild purchased a new television and DVDs

for the Emergency Department in Armstrong's memory. Armstrong had always wanted an aquarium in the Emergency Department, and the Guild thought a virtual aquarium would be a wonderful gift.

"We wanted to give something to the public and families who are waiting," said member **Patty Rhoades**. "It was something Kristi felt was important to help families take the edge off."

The Centennial Guild also offers a nursing scholarship every year in Armstrong's name and raises funds through events such as OysterFest and the Goldsborough Run/Walk/Jog, which has been cancelled this year due to concerns surrounding COVID-19.

The Centennial Guild is always looking for new members. Contact (360) 427-3623 or [foundation@masongeneral.com](mailto:foundation@masongeneral.com) for more information. ■