

Community raises thousands for new mammography machine

BY CAITLYN MAY
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

When the hospital in Cottage Grove received its digital mammography machine in 2006, it would be two years before any other facility in Lane County would see the same upgrade in technology.

But nine years later, the company that manufactured the machine put the hospital on notice: there would be no further service or parts offered for their prized machine.

"We have a digital mammography machine. It was a campaign that the foundation did. It was a huge deal in Cottage Grove to have this machine," said Jessica Baker, foundation specialist for the Cottage Grove Community Medical Center Foundation.

"Effective 2017, that machine is no longer servicable. They will no longer to come in and do maintenance and parts will no longer be available," she said.

In order to continue offering services that utilized the machine, the hospital would have to purchase a new 3-D model.

The solution was anything but simple: raise \$400,000. Soon.

While the digital machine was utilized for preventative screenings and not necessarily late detection, the community would be left with no option for local screenings if the machine stopped working.

"The campaign started because we realized we need to get the next machine, which is 3D before this machine breaks. We need to do this," Baker said.

Other factors contributed to the decision to replace the machine rather than rely on services in Eugene; including the small town sentiments of Cottage Grove.

"That's the thing," Baker said. "If there's something you already don't want to do, it's easy to make the excuse not to drive to Eugene and then people go without those screenings."

Baker went into overdrive, working with community leaders and local nonprofits to explore potential sources of funds. A consolidation of costs brought the needed total down to \$377,000 and PeaceHealth shouldered the cost for a new CT scanner, leaving the Foundation to focus on the mammography machine.

"We started talking to community partners and donors. It was pretty much my two years here being spent talking to organizations, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, just getting the word out," Baker said.

"The auxiliary, the volunteers here at the hospital donated \$10,000," Baker said. She also noted that caregivers had the option of donating through payroll deductions. "It was everywhere, money was coming from everywhere. You had money coming from all different places."

Over \$70,000 was raised locally with Baker explaining that several \$10,000 donations came in from residents and organizations that requested their identities remain undisclosed.

Once the community had raised half of the funds, Baker looked towards a top-off grant to finish the project.

"It was nerve wrecking," said Heather Quaas-Annsa before joining the team, the largest grant she had ever written was for \$12,000.

"This was six figures and my first major grant."

A letter of inquiry was sent in March followed by the final grant application in May. A site visit was performed in August and according to Baker, one question that continued to be raised was why the residents of Cottage Grove couldn't drive to Eugene for care.

"They kept asking why people couldn't drive 20 minutes down the road but that's part of why people live in Cottage Grove," Baker said. "There's a reason they live here. They don't want to deal with the parking and all of that. It's important that we had this service in our community."

The M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust awarded up to \$137,000 on November 17, clearing the way for the new machine to arrive in February or March of this year. The old machine will be traded in as part of the new purchase.

"It was a lot of work," Baker said. "But not as much as I thought it would be because people really came forward with donations. This community is amazing."



A digital mammography machine was state-of-the-art in 2006 but after it became obsolete, a mad fundraising effort began to fund a new machine.

Ideas for a waste-free holiday clean-up

Tips from Lane County

Electronic devices have become a big part of holiday gift giving. Each new advance in technology, however, brings with it an ever increasing amount of hazardous electronic waste.

Recycling and reusing electronics saves the energy used in mining and processing of raw materials, conserves natural resources, and reduces environmental degradation, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), for every one million cell phones we recycle, 35,000 pounds of copper, 772

pounds of silver, 75 pounds of gold and 33 pounds of palladium can be recovered.

Donating unwanted electronics not only helps to protect the environment, it can also provide technical job skills and ensure access to contemporary technological tools for others, regardless of income.

Locally, residents can recycle electronics at NextStep Recycling in Eugene – and residential drop-off is free! NextStep staff and trainees will refurbish it and safely remove your data and personal information before giving it to people who other-

wise wouldn't have access to technology. If they can't fix it, they will recycle it for you by working with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality approved processors.

NextStep's Donation and Training Center is located near the corner of West 10th Ave and Garfield Street in Eugene. Donations are accepted Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. To find out more about the items NextStep accepts, visit <http://nextsteprecycling.org/residential-recycling> or call 541-686-2366.

The EPA also provides a list of companies that offer

electronic recycling options. The list can be viewed at <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/electronics-donation-and-recycling>.

Waste-Free Holidays Campaign

Lane County Master Recyclers invite community members to celebrate the season of giving by reducing, reusing, and recycling waste that is typically generated at the holidays. The Waste-Free Holidays Campaign highlights several fun, low-cost and simple waste prevention strategies families can use from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day – or

any time of year! Visit www.lanecounty.org/lessisbest to view tips and resources to help create a truly enjoyable season. New items are added throughout the season so check back periodically for inspiration and announcements of waste-free events in our area.

Lane County Master Recycler Program

Master Recyclers bridge the gap between awareness and action by motivating people to reduce solid waste at home, work and play. Lane County Master Recycler volunteers provide more than 3,000 hours of waste prevention education to

residents, businesses and events each year. Visit www.lanecounty.org/masterrecyclers to learn more.



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Our new Creswell Satellite Office is now open and running in full force. To bring convenience to our patients traveling from outside of Eugene, once a month our team will be serving the Creswell community in their town to help broaden our reach and expand our services to surrounding neighborhoods. Give us a call to see if this may be the better option for you!

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