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Patient Creates Windmill to Honour YCH Nurses

Richmond Hill, ON - When a patient's treatment is complete, the temporary bonds that form between patient and caregivers also come to an end. In the case of one York Central Hospital patient, the months of care and compassion inspired the creation of a very special tribute.

To express his appreciation to the nurses who cared for him while he was hospitalized, J.C. Masson created a 2,800-piece match-stick model of a windmill and presented it to the nurses in the Surgery Program, as a tribute to all the nurses in the hospital who cared for him.

The windmill, a symbol of the relationships that were formed between him and the nurses, "took me eight months and a lot of patience to build but it was worth it, for what they did for me. They're good people," says the 45 year-old former patient. Their actions spoke for them, he added.

Although he can't remember the first two months being in ICU at York Central Hospital, the Richmond Hill resident came away with a pretty good impression of the nurses during his one-and-a-half year stay.

He does recall that the "nurses were friendly and I got to know them pretty well."

Nurses Helped Him Beat the Odds

J.C. was diagnosed with pancreatitis upon arriving at York Central Hospital. He had a hole in his bowel from a (gall) stone which caused an infection and lead to further complications. While in hospital, he was hooked up to tubes and needed pain killers to relieve the constant pain.

When he came out of the ICU, "They (the nurses) were really surprised I made it. I wasn't expected to," he says.

While hospitalized, he had to undergo a tracheotomy, "a risky procedure where they operate on your throat," says J.C. After that kind of operation, the patient may have scar tissue build-up in the throat making it difficult to breathe. He still has a difficult time swallowing and he misses the taste of food, especially hamburgers.

J.C. plans to have one more operation to clear up the blockage in his throat so that he can enjoy the pleasures of eating solid food again.

On the Road Again

“I was pretty active before getting sick,” he says. He’s now riding his bike again and going for long walks around the neighbourhood, something he is very proud of achieving.

After about a year of lying in a hospital bed, not being able to move by himself, J.C. had to learn to walk again before he could leave.

Since his release from hospital in May 2005, J.C. has made many strides toward regaining his health. He looks forward to the day when he can get behind the wheel of a five-ton truck again, a job he used to do for a Newmarket boat parts and accessories distributor. He also set up his own home renovation business, J.C.’s Handy Work, shortly before he became ill. Now, he hopes to earn the money to be able to pay for the professional tools and equipment he sold to pay the bills that he accumulated while he was hospitalized.

Before he worked in shipping and receiving with the distribution company, J.C. drove a school bus for about 10 years, until 1992. He mastered the art of driving so well, that he won first place representing Richmond Hill in the York Region competition the first time he participated in a school bus rodeo. He came in third in the grand championships, among 100 drivers and 15 school boards, on an on-road marked course that was set up to test practical applications of safety rules and the driver’s skills.

His outlook is very positive, and with his track record, there is no doubt that he will be back on the road again very soon.

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