

MEDIA RELEASE
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Okanagan Chapter of the Sovereign Order of St. John Commits \$50,000 to JoeAnna's House.

KELOWNA, BC – For over 900 years, the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem has been helping the sick and the poor in communities around the world. Here in Kelowna, the local chapter continues the tradition, with a commitment to raise and donate \$50,000 to JoeAnna's House.

The local Okanagan Commandery (chapter) of the SOSJ, made of up 16 dedicated members, is one of 27 Commanderies in 14 countries worldwide. The international office is located in Vancouver, B.C. Members of the Sovereign Order serve their community through goodwill and devotion to their cause, and their work centres on projects that provide comfort for the ill.



Pictured from left: Members Harry McWatters, Sasha Carter (KGH Foundation), Debra Martin, Kathy Kriitmaa, Lisa Lalonde, Joy Zsombor and Randall Fairey

JoeAnna's House, a home away from home for the families of patients who must travel to Kelowna General Hospital for advanced medical care is a cause firmly connected to the Sovereign Order's history. In the 11th century, Christian pilgrims were often called to travel to sacred sites of worship in Jerusalem. Along the way, many travellers suffered injury and illness. Eventually, a few dedicated merchants established a hospice to care for the ill travellers and their families and the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem was born.

“JoeAnna's House is absolutely the kind of project our organization desires to support,” says Joy Zsombor, Commander of the Okanagan Commandery. “Helping our neighbors fills us with great joy to be able to support such a needed project.”

This past spring, the Okanagan membership presented the KGH Foundation with their first installment of \$10,000 for JoeAnna's House. The passionate group raised the funds through a variety of creative events including wine nights and private dinners.

“We are deeply grateful for the generosity of these wonderful men and women,” says Sasha Carter, Director of Legacy Giving for the KGH Foundation. “Their dedication to carrying on the tradition of the Sovereign Order by supporting local families in need is really inspiring.”

The public is invited to attend the SOSJ’s next fundraising event, “Art & Wine: Because you Care” at Sandhill Winery in Kelowna on Friday, November 2 at 7:00 PM. Every dollar of the proceeds generated will be matched by the SOSJ Okanagan, to a maximum amount of \$25,000, and will go to help build JoeAnna’s House. Every “couple” ticket holder and every “single” ticket holder will be given a unique lottery number and go home with an original piece of art worth between \$200 and \$800. The art has largely been donated by the local community of talented professional artists. Small bites will be provided by the staff and students of Okanagan College.

Tickets are available on [Eventbrite](#), and on the [SOSJ Okanagan FaceBook page](#).

The KGH Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization committed to enhancing the delivery of healthcare to the patients of Kelowna General Hospital and its associated facilities.

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