

MEDIA RELEASE

Neighbourhood Streets Flooded with Supporters as JoeAnna's House Officially Opens

KELOWNA, BC, November 22, 2019 – After two years of fundraising and an ambitious construction schedule, JoeAnna's House is officially open and ready to welcome families in need.

The public came out in droves on Thursday night to 'turn the lights on' at JoeAnna's House, and celebrate the completion of the project that so many held near and dear to their hearts.

Those in attendance were treated to a clear, starry night, and warmed from the inside out by the spectacular display of community pride that JoeAnna's House has come to represent. In addition to the light up, the celebration included live music, hot chocolate and the first look inside.

The event marks the closing of the build project and the KGH Foundation's campaign to fund the build and opening.

"Every person here owns a little piece of JoeAnna's House. Because you give, families from across the southern interior who are facing some of the most desperate moments of their lives, will have a safe, warm place of refuge," said Doug Rankmore, CEO of the KGH Foundation, referencing the fact that JoeAnna's House has been entirely funded by the generosity of donors.

Rankmore also shared that the fundraising support for the project has exceeded all expectations. "We asked you for \$8 million. And you answered the call. Together, you gave over \$10 million!"



The lights are on at JoeAnna's House.

Photo credit: Liz Tremblay, Aviva Studios

“Our community saw a glaring need for a home like this, and our community came together to build it,” said Mayor Colin Basran. “We already know we have some of the best medical services and professionals in the province, and now we have a home that will help families through the treatment and healing process.”

“It’s very emotional for me,” said Christina Palmer, a mother from Penticton who is frequently in and out of hospital in Kelowna and Vancouver with her daughter, Charlotte. “It’s so beautiful. I’m really grateful to everyone who made JoeAnna’s House possible so that out of town families like ours will have a place to stay while our loved ones are at KGH.”

Every year, thousands of families from across the interior of British Columbia must travel from their homes in order for a loved one to receive life-saving, specialist care at Kelowna General Hospital.

As the leading referral hospital for over 1 million residents in the BC interior, at any given time, one out of every four beds at KGH is occupied by someone from outside the Central Okanagan. Having to travel for medical care adds significantly to a family’s hardship when a loved one is ill. JoeAnna’s House provides much-needed support, a home away from home for families in need.

“The first families will be welcomed to JoeAnna’s House as early as this coming Monday,” said Darlene Haslock, Manager of Operations at JoeAnna’s House. “We expect to be at full capacity by Christmas.”

An additional viewing opportunity for the public has been announced:

OPEN HOUSE

Friday, November 22

2pm – 6pm

The KGH Foundation maintains their role lead fundraising organization and service operator for JoeAnna’s House in perpetuity.

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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