



# Restoring *Hope* Transplant House

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## **Part One – The House**

- With all the challenges the world has faced in 2020 and 2021, this year may go down as our best fundraising year ever. The response to the mission of our house through the most challenging of times has been nothing short of miraculous.
- Even during the worst pandemic of our lifetime, UW Hospital performed a record number of transplants last year. The need for housing and total family care at one of the finest transplant hospitals in the world as well as the adjacent VA Hospital is higher than ever.
- For a significant stretch during Covid, UW Hospital closed off entry to all caregivers which greatly impacted our guests during the worst of Covid, but for the past several months, they have re-opened to one caregiver per day per patient. We have returned much more to normal since spring while still maintaining Covid safety protocols as outlined by the county, state and hospital.
- We have seen a significant increase in guests from the Milwaukee, Kenosha, Racine areas after Froedtert stopped performing some critical types of organ transplants.
- With Covid precautions in place, we are very proud of the fact that no cases of Covid have ever been traced back to RHTH. This is especially critical given the immune compromised cases we see in transplantation.
- Lions from several area clubs have volunteered to help with many outdoor projects here at RHTH this past year and have always responded within minutes when some urgent need assistance has popped up. Others have regularly stopped with donated items for the house and guest use. What a blessing they all have been.

## **Part Two – Construction**

- We have some very exciting updates from our construction efforts to help renovate the historic portions of this landmark house and expand to meet the growing needs of our transplant families as a partner of two world-class transplant hospitals. This spring/summer have been the most incredible fundraising stretch we have had to date with over \$600,000 in funds outside of Lions raised in donations and pledges specifically earmarked for construction from several prominent businesses, foundations and groups including The Culver's Foundation, an

anonymous major donor through the Madison Community Foundation, kidney recipient Pleasant Rowland, Endres Mfg., Springs Industries, and even our own transplant families to name just a handful.

- We have now raised over the 1 million dollar milestone that was the initial fundraising goal of our bankers and construction team for a project that was projected to cost \$2.5M prior to the pandemic and the ripple effects created in the lumber and construction industry. That final figure does not include the donation of products or labor such as the bathroom related donations provided by Kohler and Bemis (former transplant guests), as well as other potential donations of an elevator, furnaces, etc. as well as volunteer time by painters and other skilled trades people who will be donating their time and talents.
- The support of generous statewide Lions has amounted to about 1/3 of our operations and 1/3 of our construction funding. Amazing work throughout the state!
- We meet weekly with our Lions Club Advisory Council on construction progress and fundraising.
- With the anxieties of the pandemic, it has been such an incredible blessing to see the community, supporters and our transplant families so embrace our vision for making the state of Wisconsin a national leader both in the quality of medical care in all areas of transplantation and also a leader in providing the financial and emotional care to families while going through what will likely be the greatest challenge they face on many different fronts. We are so completely energized and grateful at this incredible response on the heels of the greatest pandemic of our lifetime.
- With our expansion dreams ever nearer as a result, we continue to raise funds in an effort to keep our construction related debt as low as possible so that we can continue to provide the lowest rates possible to our families in need. We must also be increasingly mindful of the historic increase in the cost of lumber and construction materials and cross our fingers on a daily basis that those return more to normal as soon as possible. Major country wide delays in the supply chain are also a significant issue at the moment that one of our Lions friends confirmed still this month in the work he does. We lean heavily now on our construction team to determine the best time to begin based on those factors with all of our focus on securing the long-term future of this special place for future generations of transplant families.
- We are so appreciative of the many behind the scenes advisors from banking, insurance, construction, medical, business, non-profit and so many more who continue to guide us through these unprecedented times and who understand the immense complexities of undergoing a major construction project at this time.
- If you have any additional leads, ideas or suggestions on how we can continue to keep this momentum going towards making Wisconsin a national leader in all areas of transplantation and keeping our area at the epicenter of it all, please contact Cindy Herbst at any time at 608-831-1726 or via email at [restoringhope@tds.net](mailto:restoringhope@tds.net).