

'A Strong Community Means Giving Something Back'



In times of economic uncertainty, some things remain certain, like the need for top-quality healthcare in one's community.

"We've seen some businesses leaving the state, but we can't drive healthcare out of the state," says Hugh Casey. "We need quality healthcare close to home."

With that belief in mind, Hugh and Cindy Casey, owners of Brustolon Buick GMC in Mystic, recently made a sizeable pledge to Lawrence + Memorial's Centennial Capital Campaign.

"We're all facing challenges right now," Hugh added. "The business climate in Connecticut is tough, and the state is facing tough times, but there are certain things we cannot afford to overlook. Supporting our hospital is something we feel very strongly about. It's been a tradition in our family, and it's something we hope our children will continue."

Indeed, the philanthropic spirit exhibited by the Caseys was nurtured through the years by the example of Cindy's father, Joseph Brustolon. Brustolon served in the Army Air Force during World War II, but the Mystic native returned home after the war to open a small auto repair business.

A half century later, Brustolon had grown the business into one of the region's well-known auto dealerships, and Brustolon repaid the community's support of the family business by supporting local organizations like L+M.

Cindy Casey acknowledges that her father set the tone in the family. "My dad understood that a core belief in the need for a strong community means making a commitment and really giving something back," she said.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Brustolon was a committed fundraiser for L+M, never hesitating to make the phone calls to encourage others to give. He served as a corporator and later as a trustee.

When Cindy and Hugh took over the dealership from Joe Brustolon, they continued investing in the community, expanding the dealership and renovating the showroom, which today sits on seven-acres off Route 1. They have also continued supporting L+M Hospital.

Cindy's connections to L+M are not unlike her dad's. She was born at L+M, as were all five of the Casey children, and today she is a corporator. Cindy met Hugh during her college days at Bryant College in Rhode Island, and Hugh recalls that he learned the auto trade from his future father-in-law.

"Joe was like a second father to me," Hugh said. "He was my mentor for 25 years. We traveled and worked together. And he introduced me to the auto business from the inside out."

Brustolon's added lessons of community giving are something that Cindy and Hugh hope will continue as their children inherit the family business.

"It's part of our upbringing," Cindy added. "Dad believed in doing business locally, and when it comes to your health and the health of your family, quality care is of the utmost importance."

"We believe our gift to L+M helps ensure the caliber of care the hospital offers to all the people of southeastern Connecticut," Cindy continued. "That's why Dad did so much for the hospital and why we're committed to continuing his legacy."

L+M Hospital's Centennial Capital Campaign was publicly announced in 2013 to help pay for the hospital's state-of-the-art Cancer Center located in Waterford. Today, the campaign is closing in on its \$30 million goal.

"We thank the Casey family for their recent pledge as we try to reach the finish line of the Campaign," says Bill Stanley, vice president of development and community relations. "The outpouring of support from the community has been amazing. Our friends and neighbors continue to demonstrate that they believe in the future of their hospital."

Cindy suggests that people who have not yet given should consider what a pledge to the Hospital's Campaign really means. "We all hope we don't have to use the hospital, but we sure want it there if we ever do need it," she said. "Knowing L+M is there is one of the things that makes southeastern Connecticut a great place to live."