

**Howard and Audrey Russell at their 50th wedding anniversary in June, 2009.**



**A little over a year and a half ago, I was wondering what the future would hold for me.**

**At 70 years of age, I wasn't able to do anything because of unbearable, severe pain in my hips and limbs. I couldn't sleep for more than 2 hours at night, and it was difficult to be up during the day. The pain just never stopped, it only seemed to get worse.**

**As time went on, I began having to increase my pain medication and it became apparent to me that I could not live with this condition. As my wife Audrey would say, "I just didn't have a life."**

**That all changed when I was seen by Dr. Rajgopal, a new Orthopaedic Surgeon at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital. He performed a hip replacement, and it changed my life.**

**I was considered a high-risk patient because of my medical history of strokes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and frequent fainting spells, but knowing all of that, Dr. Rajgopal felt the hip replacement surgery would help to relieve my pain.**

**For those who have experienced degenerative arthritis, I am sure that you could close your eyes and remember exactly the words said to you when you were diagnosed. It is a terrible moment that never goes away. We have to remember that moment, so we can put ourselves back into the shoes of the newly diagnosed and offer our help to them.**

**That's why I'm writing to you today. Because my hip replacement was such a success, we made a \$60 donation. Then we decided to give another \$40 to make a total gift of \$100 this season.**

**Your past support has meant so much to the Hospital. I'd like to ask you to also consider making a gift in support of the purchase of new anesthetic machines for the operating rooms. These machines will cost \$300,000 and must be replaced immediately as they are used during all types of surgery.**

Community Hospitals depend on donations from supporters to sustain health care services. This includes purchasing equipment that the medical staff will use to help patients.

My wife and I are so grateful that we came to Strathroy Hospital and found Dr. Rajgopal. I believe he is motivated by something else, he's just a different kind of 'cat' with a great bedside manner and excellent surgeon.

In fact, every person we came across at the Hospital was friendly and helpful, which made us feel welcome. I have complete confidence in the staff and facility. We were blown away by the cleanliness!

I am happy to be able to return to my hobbies and daily activities after recovering. With my pain gone, I have been able to reduce my reliance on medication.

One of my hobbies is wood carving. I wanted Dr. Rajgopal to have a few small pieces of my work as a humble expression of my gratitude. I carved him a stylized bird from aromatic cedar from the eastern USA, and I also gave him a pair of carved boots.

Most importantly, I know that what he and the other doctors and nurses at the Hospital really need is to have the best equipment to do their work - helping to improve and save lives. That is why financial gifts to support the Hospital are so important.

If your pain is as terrible as mine was, you know how important it is to ensure others get the help they need. **I encourage you to make a tax-deductible donation today to support the purchase of new anesthetic machines for Strathroy Hospital.**

Together, we will help other patients have the same chance to live pain free with many treatment options available at Strathroy Hospital.

Sincerely,



Howard Russell  
Orthopaedic surgery patient at Strathroy Hospital

**P.S.** Thank you for considering my donation request in support of Strathroy Hospital. Any gift amount made before the end of 2009 will help. I know the Foundation can answer any questions you may have, and you can always reach them at 519-2346-5906.