

A Gentle Man with a Kind Heart

It became a ritual. Every Friday night, John Lynch and his wife, Mary, drove to an empty field on the outskirts of Waterloo. Once there, John started pacing the grounds. He pointed to stakes driven into the earth and explained to Mary what they represented — a therapy room, gymnasium, swimming pool.

For John, that empty field was the realization of a long-held dream: the creation of a modern treatment facility — the present-day KidsAbility Centre for Child Development.

Mary remembers fondly, “John watched the construction of the project from the moment they broke ground to the ribbon cutting. He could not have been prouder.” When the building was officially opened, both KidsAbility and John Lynch were declared “community treasures.”

John’s journey with KidsAbility started in 1982 and continued to 2015, the year he passed away. As Mary states, “John spent so much time at KidsAbility, it was his second home.” Therefore, KidsAbility found it only appropriate to name a room after him.

Described as a “gentle man who wanted to make a difference in the world,” John set out to do just that. At KidsAbility, he became president of the Board and later the Foundation Board. In each role, he used his experience as a tax partner at KPMG to grow the organization and provide a sound foundation to support the needs of the children. Perhaps more importantly, he acted as a mentor, sharing his expertise and wisdom, which had an indelible impact on all those he met.

It is no surprise that in 2005 John received KidsAbility Foundation’s highest honour — the Outstanding Supporter Butterfly Award — for his contributions and ongoing commitment to the organization. As a Rotarian of 40 years who epitomized the values of “Service Above Self,” John was also awarded the Paul Harris Fellow.

In 2016, the Rotary Club of Waterloo’s annual Golf Fore KidsAbility tournament was held as a tribute to John. The response was overwhelming with the tournament selling out well in advance. The community came out in droves to show their support, respect and love for John.

For a gentle man who wanted to make a difference in the world, John did just that! At KidsAbility, the impact of his efforts are clear to all those who had the pleasure of working by his side.



John & Mary Lynch

Volunteer, Donor, Rotarian and
2005 Outstanding Supporter Award Recipient