

*Volunteer wins prestigious award for fundraising for sick children*

# 77-year-old making miracles happen

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**By Henry Bury**  
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Pat Harrison helps make miracles happen.

The 77-year-old West Lake resident has raised thousands of dollars for Garratt's Island Farm Retreat, a Prince Edward County summer holiday getaway that accommodates up to 1,200 children with life-threatening illnesses.

"I am lucky to be healthy and have the energy at my age to help children who are not as fortunate," Harrison said. "I find it very rewarding to make a difference in their lives."

And it was that attitude which earned her a prestigious award.

CIBC Wood Gundy and the CIBC World Markets Children's Miracle Foundation presented Harrison with the "Miracle Maker Award" at a ceremony Wednesday at its branch office in Century Place.

The investment company pre-

sents the award annually to people who have made significant contributions to children's charities in their communities.

Harrison is the first local recipient of the Miracle Maker Award because CIBC Wood Gundy has only been in business in Belleville since 2000.

The firm also presented Harrison with a cheque for \$2,571 to donate to the children's charity of her choice. The donation was made possible by the CIBC World Markets Children's Miracle Day whereby commissions earned by investment advisors on the first Wednesday of every December are presented to more than 350 children's charities across the country.

The Quinte Regional Children's Foundation also received a \$2,905 cheque from the investment firm during the ceremony.

Last year, more than \$17.6 million was raised globally for children's charities; donations to date exceed \$147 million.

Chris Maguire, Belleville branch manager for CIBC Wood Gundy, said Harrison is an "extremely worthy" recipient of the first local Miracle Maker award.

"Over the past 10 years, Mrs. Harrison has made a tremendous contribution to our community through her work with Garratt's Island Farm Retreat," he said.

"Her drive and leadership have had an impact on thousands of children, not just from Prince Edward County, but the entire province of Ontario. We are very proud to present her with the Miracle Maker Award."

Harrison was modest in accepting her award.

"It's not only one person. I have a wonderful committee that is very dedicated to the cause of Garratt's Island Farm Retreat ... I am honoured because this award recognizes the work that I do on behalf of the facility," she said.

Harrison is a longtime member of the Garratt's Island Farm Retreat

board.

She has also overseen its fundraising activities since 1996. For the past 11 years, she has co-ordinated the popular Festival of Trees community event that raises between \$40,000 and \$50,000.

Every dollar raised helps Garratt's Island, said Harrison.

The facility boasts numerous cottages to accommodate summer campers, as well as a recreation centre and dining hall. It also owns several watercraft for children's use.

"Fundraising is important because we need to update the cabins to make them usable for three seasons, not just the summer," she said.

Garratt's Island is special for Harrison.

"I just think it's such a beautiful spot for children who have serious health problems so that they can get away from everything," she said.

"I love helping children and I do it by raising money for Garratt's Island."

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*Harrison, Pat*

*Intelligencer, May 27/05 p. 2*