BOCA RATON REGIONAL HOSPITAL CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

From Tragedy to Triumph, the Miracle on Meadows Road

BOCA RATON, FL – January 23, 2017 – Boca Raton Regional Hospital announces the celebration of its 50th anniversary in 2017. Born out of tragedy, the Hospital opened its doors in 1967.

On April 21, 1962, Gloria and Robert Drummond’s two children – Debra Ann and James Randall – were poisoned by a neighbor boy. By the time they reached the nearest hospital, some 30 minutes away, doctors were unable to save their lives. The Drummonds, Boca Raton residents, vowed to never let this lack of a local hospital result in the loss of other lives and pulled together fellow residents and set out to establish a hospital in the city.

Thus began a saga that would culminate in what came to be known as the “Miracle on Meadows Road” – Boca Raton Community Hospital.

Gloria’s steadfast commitment and leadership resulted in the formation of the Debbie-Rand Memorial Service League, named in memory of her deceased children. Over a span of five years, an original group of 18 would grow to over 700 members, whose fundraising raised hundreds of thousands of dollars through a variety of projects and special events ranging from charity balls to the establishment of a thrift shoppe.

These efforts generated the seed money for the building of the new hospital. When Boca Raton Community Hospital opened on July 17, 1967, the League was ready to provide volunteers and to continue to raise funds to support Hospital initiatives.

“Here we are, today, charged with the responsibility of ‘keeping the promise.’ To preserve and protect Gloria Drummond’s legacy, and carry it into the future with the drive and passion she bequeathed to us,” said Edmund Nasralla, President of the Debbie-Rand Memorial Service League, which now numbers in
excess of 1,200 volunteers. “Gloria’s unwavering commitment allowed us to build a Hospital that not only lived up to but exceeded her highest expectations.”

Throughout the 1970’s, Boca Raton Community Hospital grew from 104 beds at its opening to a nine floor, 394-bed hospital. As the community continued to expand, so did the Hospital. In 1984, a 25,000 square-foot facility was acquired. Named the Debbie-Rand Memorial Pavilion, this would soon be the home of the Women’s Center in 1990.

In 1992, the Lynn Regional Cancer Center began seeing patients, and in 1993 the Hospital’s new maternity wing opened. The maternity unit would later be named Toppel Family Place in 2007.

In 1999, Davis Therapy Centers, the rehabilitation arm of the Hospital, was established.

Through the generosity of community members, the Hospital continued to expand its services to meet the needs of Boca Raton. In September 2006, the Christine E. Lynn Heart Institute was created, thus making it the first open-heart program started in Palm Beach County in over 22 years. The Hospital’s Christine E. Lynn Heart & Vascular Institute has been named twice as one of the Top Hospitals with Great Cardiovascular Programs by Becker’s Hospital Review.

The Eugene M. & Christine E. Lynn Cancer Institute at the Harvey & Phyllis Sandler Pavilion was created in 2008 and is one of the largest cancer programs in the state of Florida. The award-winning $73 million, 98,000 square-foot facility houses the Hospital’s imaging, radiation, chemotherapy, cancer support services and clinical research, as well as the Morgan Pressel Center for Genetics. In 2013, Becker’s Hospital Review also recognized the Lynn Cancer Institute as one of the 100 Hospitals and Health Systems with Great Oncology Programs.

In 2010, Boca Raton Community Hospital changed its name to Boca Raton Regional Hospital to more aptly convey its growing capabilities as an advanced, academic tertiary medical center and its broadening geographical service area.

In 2011, Boca Regional enhanced and expanded the Hospital’s Emergency Department through the Wold Family Center for Emergency Medicine.

In 2012, Boca Regional received a $25 million grant, then the largest, single philanthropic gift in the institution’s history, from the Marcus Foundation and Bernie Marcus, former CEO of The Home Depot, and his wife, Billi. The Marcus Neuroscience Institute at the Schmidt Family Pavilion was built on the Hospital’s main campus. The facility opened in January 2015 and serves as a new, state-of-the-art nexus of care for neurologic and neurosurgical patients and has transformed the landscape of clinical capabilities available in the region.

In July 2015, the Hospital’s new Christine E. Lynn Women’s Health & Wellness Institute opened. The Institute provides women in South Florida with a continuum of care that addresses a woman’s unique medical needs. The strikingly beautiful, 46,000 square-foot facility offers the expertise of renowned clinicians, the most advanced imaging technology in the region and a myriad of holistic and educational programs, as well as support groups.

“The unrelenting commitment from our community is rooted in the origins of Boca Raton Regional Hospital. The Hospital and its subsequent growth were made possible through the largesse of our generous donors,” said Mark Larkin, President of Boca Regional’s Foundation. “As you walk through our campus, this longstanding tradition of philanthropy is readily evident.”
The Hospital’s clinical expertise, technology and unique programs such as oncology, cardiovascular disease and surgery, minimally invasive surgery, orthopedics, women’s health, emergency medicine and the neurosciences have garnered national recognition for its quality of care. The Hospital also serves as the primary teaching site for Florida Atlantic University’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine Internal Medicine and General Surgery Residency Programs.

“The creation of Boca Raton Regional Hospital is a testament to the perseverance and commitment of the residents in our community. An idea, supported by friends and neighbors, has enabled the growth of a renowned academic medical center in the heart of our city,” said Boca Raton Mayor Susan Haynie. “Fifty years in the making and the hospital is still growing and innovating, saving and enriching the lives of our residents. We are so proud of the accomplishments of Boca Raton Regional Hospital and look forward to its continued success.”

Recognized for excellence by such sources as U.S. News & World Report as a top ranked regional hospital, National Research Corporation as a Consumer Choice Award recipient for high quality and image and Castle Connolly Medical Ltd. for the most “Top Docs” in Palm Beach County, Boca Raton Regional Hospital – the “Miracle on Meadows Road” – has transformed itself from a capable community hospital into an institution in the vanguard of medicine today.

“What Gloria Drummond envisioned over five decades ago when she began her quest to establish a hospital in Boca Raton has become a magnificent reality,” said Jerry Fedele, President and CEO of Boca Raton Regional Hospital. “The promise she made galvanized a city then…and motivates and drives our doctors, employees, volunteers and philanthropists today.”

The 50th anniversary celebration kicked off with Boca Raton Regional Hospital’s 55th Annual Ball on January 21, 2017. The Hospital’s will celebrate its official birthday on July 17, 2017.

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