

BIOGRAPHY

Karen Ryan Senior of the Year 2023

Karen is truly a one-in-a-million human being, she is a dedicated volunteer, talented event organizer, and is highly regarded by every single individual who she has impacted as part of the Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre (GBCSC) family.

Karen and her family have been affected by cancer in a more personal and trying way than any individual should. She and her family have spent the better part of the last several decades in and out of the hospital dealing with the never-ending battle that is faced by people impacted by cancer. Yet she has used and continues to use this experience to make her community a better place. As a member of the GBCSC, Karen serves as mentor, a resource, and an inspiration to other members attending the group programs and services. She is a part of an invaluable network of people who can provide support for one another through their journeys. She dedicates hours each week between hospital appointments to being at the Centre engaging with other members and sharing what she's learned through her journey to help them through their own.

As a volunteer, Karen cannot be replaced. She has taken leadership roles in several major events and fundraisers. She worked tirelessly alongside staff members and navigated the complexities and sensitivities of hosting a memorial gathering for families of those who have lost their lives.

Karen is a steady force at the GBCSC and within the community. The value that she provides to the organization is mirrored by what she provides as a member of the Penetanguishene Lions Club, Penetanguishene Museum & Heritage Advisory Committee and Friends of the Penetanguishene Centennial Museum and Archives. It is hard to fathom someone who has every reason to carry a grudge against the world but instead she is giving so much in return, but that is what Karen chooses to do day in and day out.

Karen continues to play an incredible role in improving life in Penetanguishene for so many people, and we can expect that we'll see her continue to leave her mark for years to come.

Congratulations Karen on being Penetanguishene's 2023 Senior of the Year.