

BIW Community Support for Teddy Bear Club is Extraordinary!

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The Mid Coast Hospital Auxiliary Teddy Bear Club received a **MAJOR** fundraising boost April 20 when **Bath Iron Works** Operations held a communication meeting with the Teddy Bear Club as its community service project. Over \$3,000 was collected (with more expected) to purchase custom designed MCH Teddy bears from local manufacturer, Grampa's Garden of Brunswick.

Kirk Lussier presented the funds to Kara Johnson, Auxiliary Teddy bear chair, who told the huge crowd assembled for the meeting, "You are all members of the Mid Coast Hospital Teddy Bear Club," thanking the employees and telling them what a bear does for children of the mid coast area who are treated at Mid Coast.

Kara said her first thought is "obviously about the children. When children go to the MCH for surgery or the ER, the Teddy Bear Club comforts them. Health professionals given them a new bear to hold and love. We have heard first hand, and from some of us personal experiences with our own children, that long after the health issue has healed, the child remembers the Teddy bear. It becomes a cherished friend."

Kara also thinks about the parents, who have "less anxiety because their child is calmer." She expects the doctors, nurses and other clinical staff at Mid Coast have an "easier job taking care of pressing medical needs, because the child AND his or her parents are more relaxed. Mid Coast has an environment of health and healing, from the natural window light in each room, to the calming art work, to the beautiful grounds and walking trails. The Teddy Bear Club contributes to this health and healing of our littlest patients."

"Lastly," Kara told the crowd, "I think of you. For each and every one of you who make a donation today, you have touched the life of a child, their parents, their medical team, their health and healing. Your act today has lasting effects. On behalf of Mid Coast Hospital, we thank you."



At left, Kirk Lussier of BIW Operations accepts a certificate and Grampa's Garden Teddy Bear from Kara Johnson, Mid Coast Hospital Auxiliary Teddy Club chair at April 20 meeting .