

Par for a Cause - A lifeline of thanks from the Bulldogs Foundation



2025 PFAC committee members Chair Melanie Oster, Amy Campbell, Judy Forbes, Holly Robertson and Laurie Gatto with Bulldogs Foundation Executive Director Peggy Chapman and Bruiser the mascot.

A year ago, Peggy Chapman could not believe it when she learned The Bulldogs Foundation Nutrition Program would be receiving an \$80,000 lifeline thanks to the generosity of all those who supported Par for a Cause at HGCC.

Last week, the Bulldogs Foundation Executive Director was once again overcome with a feeling of gratitude when PFAC Chair Melanie Oster sent her a note with more wonderful news – a whopping \$93,000 will be donated later this fall to support a nutritional food program that runs at 20 high-needs schools in Hamilton.

“Many of the teachers were in the schools the last week of August, and we were able to work with them to get set up and place their first orders, so we could start the food program the first week of school,” Chapman says, noting this has not happened in the past as a result of a lack of funding and coordination. It previously took about a couple of weeks to get the programs up and running. “It’s an incredibly positive feeling when we know that the children are being fed and they won’t be sitting in classrooms with hungry stomachs to start the school year.”

Typically, the morning snack includes a fruit, a drink and some type of nutrition bar that are distributed to the classroom where children can choose the items they want to eat if they’re hungry.



Laura Jennings, Jackie Smith, Maria D’Ambrosi and Gale Zizzo with Bruiser.



Pamela Lamontagne, Darlene Ozimok-Edge, Mary Beth Duwyn & Suzanne Holick with Bruiser.

"The \$80,000 donation in 2024 was well beyond any amount I would have ever thought possible from one group. You couldn't top that, but the fact that members at HGCC went well beyond it is astonishing and deeply appreciated by all of the school, the teachers, the parents and most of all the thousands of students we help feed for the next 10 months," Peggy says. "The dedication and hard work of the organizing committee have been outstanding and a delight to work with them for the past two years, and the support of the membership has been incredible."

Following the Hamilton Bulldogs OHL Hockey Team's move from Hamilton to Brantford in 2023, the Bulldogs Foundation sought to maintain its connection to Hamilton, but securing financial support from local groups proved challenging.

Peggy says the PFAC funding allowed the food program to continue at a time when food costs and student needs were at their peak of necessity, and the situation remains dire.

For July, the Bulldogs Foundation Nutrition Program provided food assistance for about 100 youngsters at summer camps run by the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board and the Hamilton-Catholic District School Board in the heart of the city.

Schools that benefit from the food program include Adelaide Hoodless Public School, Bennetto Elementary School, Cathedral High School, Cathy Wever Elementary School, Westdale High School, Dr. Edgar Davey Elementary School, Hess Street Public School, Hillcrest School, Holy Name of Jesus Catholic School, Pauline Johnson Elementary School, Queen Victoria Elementary School, Bernie Custis Secondary School, Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, St. Ann Catholic School, St. David Catholic School, St. Lawrence Catholic School, St. Luke Catholic School, St. Michael Catholic School, St. Patrick Catholic School, Westwood Elementary School and St. Agnes Catholic Elementary School.

"I really don't know what we would have done over the last two years without the support of Par for a Cause and the HGCC community. Thank you," Peggy says, noting she is busy connecting with other community groups and strategically planning to find ways to continue the program. "The need for the program



Dawn Pray, Betsy Ippolito and Lynda Lloyd with Bruiser.



Karen Guagliano-MacIntosh purchasing a bracelet.



Nicola Jamani at the putting contest with Erica Smith, Sharon McChesney & Susan Fitzgerald.

continues to grow. The cost of food continues to rise, but at least we know all of these kids are going to be fed for 2025-2026."

The PFAC organizing committee for the past two years included Chair Melanie Oster, Holly Robertson, Judy Forbes, Amy Campbell and Laurie Gatto.

"I'm honoured to have served as Chair of Par for a Cause for the past two years, following two additional years on the committee. Working with The Bulldogs Foundation, our focus was simple and urgent: helping feed schoolchildren in our local community," Melanie says. "It has also been a pleasure to work with Peggy and her team at the Hamilton Bulldogs Foundation—what a well-run, efficient and meaningful charity. These four years have been profoundly rewarding, and I'm proud that our membership continues to prioritize giving back and the positive impact we can have together."

The theme for this year's charity event was "Fore the Love of Golf" with a pink tinge to it. Highlights included the bracelets, the Denningers' putting contest, delicious on-course food stations, an appearance by Bruiser, the Bulldogs' mascot, a hole-in-one contest for a couple of Corvettes, a stellar silent auction and a live auction for the first time, among other things.

"Our Women's and Men's Sections have been extraordinarily generous, championing healthy morning snack time so kids can focus, participate, and find joy at school. I'm grateful to have served, and proud that our work helps give children the peace of knowing there will be nutritious food at school."

Proposals are now being accepted from members interested in coordinating PFAC for the next two years in 2026 and 2027. The new chair and/or committee select the charity or charities that are supported through PFAC.



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Robin Graham, Rhonda Scott, Cathy Drury & Julie Thompson enjoying a Caesar with Bruiser.



Mary A-Z with Meredith & Elizabeth Hedley.



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