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## Honour for Wagga fund-raisers

By Ken Grimson

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THANKS: Dr Tony Cesare with, from left, Fiona Hamilton (president of the Wagga CMRI committee), Catherine Cruikshank (committee vice-president) and Susan Duffy (committee secretary). Picture: Contributed

A WAGGA fund-raising committee has had a laboratory named in its honour for raising more than \$1 million for research into children's disease.

The Wagga committee for the Children's Medical Research Institute (CMRI) holds an annual Christmas fair with the aim of donating thousands of dollars to the institute.

Members of the committee who attended the CMRI's annual general meeting recently were delighted to hear an announcement that one of the institute's four research laboratories in Sydney would be named the Wagga Wagga Laboratory.

Dr Anthony Cesare, of the CRMI, said funds raised by the Wagga committee had gone towards instruments necessary to establish a modern telomere biology laboratory.

Dr Cesare said he was in awe when he realised the Wagga committee had donated more than \$1 million to the institute over the years.

"It gives me a feeling of pride and responsibility to know that I am supported by the people of Wagga," Dr Cesare said.

The equipment is being used in studies focusing on the connection between telomeres in the body and the DNA Damage Response (DDR).

"We study this dual nature of how the DDR normally co-operates with telomeres to prevent cell growth and suppress cancers, and how failures in this process lead to genome instability and cancers," Dr Cesare said.

The president of the Wagga CMRI committee Fiona Hamilton said the unveiling of the Wagga laboratory was completely unexpected.

"As a committee and a community we should feel immensely proud," Mrs Hamilton said.

This year's Christmas fair will be held on October 24 and 25 at the Murrumbidgee Turf Club.

It is hoped another \$49,000 will be raised by the event to purchase an important piece of equipment known as a real time PCR cyler for the Wagga laboratory and Dr Cesare's work.