

WELL AWARE

PEOPLE CARING FOR PEOPLE

FALL 2023

Keep it flowing:
**You can
support
surgery**



Saskatoon City Hospital
FOUNDATION



2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Front row (l-r): George Foufas, Jackie Lehmann, Greg Clark, Kathryn Pally, Bryan Witt.

Back row: (l-r): Tracy Kendel, Tracy Arno, Holly Ward (Chair), Elizabeth Ulmer, Depesh Parmar (Vice-Chair).

Missing: Dr. Kabir Viridi, Leah Hipperson.

CONTENTS

How you helped	4
Donors: Bohdan and Eileen Bayda	6
City Park mom grateful for ER	7
How You Can Help	8
Keep It Flowing: Supporting the OR	10
Will Power	14
Dr. Verge, CMSNRC	16
Foundation Celebrates!	18



EQUIP FOR EXCELLENCE

Your donations helped several departments in the hospital.

4



KEEP IT FLOWING

The hospital's OR needs new gas machines and monitoring units.

10



GALLERY ON THE BRIDGES

Dr. Val Verge is dedicated to researching MS.

16

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Steve Shannon

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Nicole Semko

DATABASE MANAGER

Marlene Saretsky

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Ian Frias

EVENTS & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Nicole Hustej

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Tom Eremondi

GIFT SHOPPE

Brenda Johnson (Manager)

Allison Friesen

PRIVACY POLICY

Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of our donors. All personal data provided is secure information. We do not lend, exchange, rent or sell our donor lists to other organizations. We do like to publicly recognize our donors but, if you prefer to remain anonymous, please let us know.



CONTACT US

306-655-8489 info@SCHFgo.com



With this accreditation you can be assured that Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation has met the highest standards for charities as designated by Imagine Canada.

**Charitable Business Number
119140739 RR 0001**

Steve Shannon

Keep it flowing.

We're using those words for this fall and winter's fundraising campaign. The Foundation is asking you to help raise three quarters of a million dollars for new gas machines and monitors in the hospital's Operating Room.

So, naturally, keep it flowing refers to the use of gas. Everyone is likely familiar with how anaesthetic is applied during surgical procedures. As with all medical equipment, replacing and upgrading these units brings efficiencies in their use while also enhancing patient safety.

Adding this equipment means nearly every one of the 12 operating suites will have seen their gas and monitoring systems replaced recently.

This is crucial to *keep it flowing*. In this case, I'm referring to the high volume of procedures in the OR at the hospital. The feature story of this issue details how our OR is the busiest in Saskatoon.

This past spring, the provincial government announced its goal to decrease orthopedic surgery waiting lists by increasing the number of procedures done annually to more than 100,000.

With five suites dedicated to orthopedic procedures, the OR at Saskatoon City Hospital will get even busier. The 12,000 to 13,000 surgeries performed annually will increase.

Staff in the OR have responded with added hours, including



evenings and weekends. They're dedicated to helping those waiting for operations as soon as practically possible.

You can help by seeing that equipment is maintained, replaced and upgraded as needed. With additional surgeries, and the nature of those surgeries being shorter, the turnover is greater.

This means equipment is more used and needs to be cleaned more often. Having the latest and best equipment prevents breakdowns that cause delays in the procedure schedule. You'll keep it flowing.

You'll also *keep it flowing* in one more way – by continuing your long support of the Foundation and, through it, health care at Saskatoon City Hospital.

As noted in our summer issue of *Well Aware*, this year marks the 40th anniversary of Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation and the 30th anniversary of the opening of the new City Hospital building.

For four decades you've answered the call. Your responses led to a beautiful facility, home to a Breast Health Centre, an innovative MS research centre, a miraculous rehab department, and a life-changing ambulatory care program.

Your support has seen thousands enter the doors at Saskatoon City Hospital and leave much better when they arrived. You've returned quality of life to so many.

Thank you for your efforts, always, to *keep it flowing*. □

Breast Health Centre, Sleep Disorders Centre benefit

This year you've been asked to help patients get the answers they need. Your support has seen improvements to the hospital's Anatomic Pathology Lab, the Medical Imaging Department and now the Breast Health Centre.

The latest support came from longtime supporters of the Foundation, Terry and Denis Sirois. Terry is a former board member who served for several years on the organizing committee of the Black Tie Bingo.

Last spring, Terry and Denis made another very kind and generous donation of more than \$160,000. The gift will pay for a new Brevera Imaging System in the hospital's **Breast Health Centre**.

Staff and physicians requested the system after using it on a trial basis last year. When they determined it would help women having mammograms spend less time in compression and also reduce the number of tissue samples to extract, they knew it would be a perfect fit.

Thank you to Terry and Denis – your kindness will make patients more comfortable and improved the diagnostic experience!

Last fall, to support the Festival of Trees, the Foundation offered a gift of \$5,000 to a hospital department that would enter a gingerbread house in the Festival and place first in the newly created category.

Of all the SCH entries, Festival attendees chose the **Sleep Disorders Centre's** depiction



The hospital's Sleep Disorders Centre entered into the Festival of Trees gingerbread house displays last year and was named the best of the City Hospital category. The centre won \$5,000 and some of the funds will be used to purchase a new sleep recliner.

of "Christmas Down Under" as the Favourite in its category. The scene of gingerbread people frolicking on a warm Aussie beach obviously struck a chord with the wintertime crowd.

The centre used some of its winnings to purchase a second sleep recliner. "The sleep recliner will be utilized for both patients and caregivers," reports Ashleigh Gartner, manager. "Not all of our patients are able to sleep on a bed so this provides them with an alternative sleeping surface for their level 1 sleep studies.

"We also have many patients that require caregivers or family members to stay the night with them to provide care and support during their study. This gives those caregivers or family members a place to sleep while assisting their loved ones. We currently have one recliner but on many nights we need two, either due to multiple caregivers, two patients

needing alternate sleeping surfaces, or a combination of both those factors. A second sleep recliner answers that need."

Saskatoon City Hospital is a training centre for many disciplines and skills, one of those being CPR. The hospital's meeting rooms are frequently used by people learning or updating their ability to provide the crucial procedure. The equipment to teach and measure this skill is well used by the **Nursing Practice and Education** department, which asked the Foundation to provide six new Laerdal CPRmeter 2 devices.

"CPRmeter 2 is a compact feedback device that sits on the mannequin or person being resuscitated," reports Aaron Gabriel, nurse educator. "The Heart and Stroke Foundation now requires the use of feedback devices in all future CPR courses and renewal courses. These

devices provide immediate feedback about the quality of the CPR being performed by the learner, including compression rate, depth and recoil."

These CPRmeters have proven to shorten the time from demonstration practice to skill competence during training.

"The CPR equipment at SCH was nearing the end of its lifespan," Gabriel adds. "New CPRmeter 2 devices will extend the usefulness of all our current CPR mannequins while maintaining the Heart and Stroke Foundation's standards."

Recognizing this as a crucial need, the Foundation quickly approved the request.

ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease is the most common form but a busy clinic at the hospital also treats other motor neuron diseases, which is why it's known as the **ALS/MND Clinic**. It recently asked the Foundation to purchase a respiratory pressure meter.

"New CPRmeter devices will extend the usefulness of all of our current CPR mannequins while maintaining the Heart and Stroke Foundation's standards."

"This is a simple non-invasive piece of equipment that tests respiratory muscle function," explains Kala Bolt with the clinic. "It's specifically able to test Sniff Nasal Inspiratory Pressure (SNIP) during clinic visits to monitor clients' respiratory muscle decline. There's increasing literature that supports the use of this testing with ALS clients, hopefully aiding physicians with client symptom management and intervention."

Having the respiratory pressure meter available for in-person clinic appointments will aid in same day SNIP testing, she adds. "This will increase a physician's ability to prescribe or recommend certain treatment options for clients in a timely manner. The

device is easy and quick to use, therefore requiring minimal training and time to complete testing on clients."

This equipment is particularly important for patients with lip weakness and who are unable to form a seal around the standard equipment for checking lung function. Accurate numbers help physicians and care providers suggest respiratory supports, tube feed referrals, or to prognosticate a patient's disease trajectory.

To donate, visit SCHFgo.com and click on the red "Donate" button. You also can call 306-655-8489 or stop by the Foundation office near the main entrance doors of the hospital. □



Many people come to Saskatoon City Hospital to learn or update their CPR skills. The Nursing and Education Department asked for help to replace CPRmeter devices that help teach this crucial skill.

Bohdan and Eileen Bayda return gratitude to Foundation

What goes around comes around. In spring of 2021, Bohdan “Bud” and Eileen Bayda won more than \$600,000 in the Hospital Home Lottery’s 50-50. A little more than a year later, they gave Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation a generous gift of \$30,000.

“We’d been buying the Hospital Home Lottery tickets for several years and always considered it our donation,” Eileen says. “We never expected to win so we were so surprised when Steve [Foundation CEO Steve Shannon] called to tell us. I took the call and had to run to get Bud.”

Supporting the hospital through the Foundation was a given, as the couple has had a long association with it.

Eileen graduated from the Saskatoon City Hospital nursing school in 1967 and worked in it several times during her career.

Bud, a commerce graduate, worked in administration and finance for the hospital and then the Health Region from 1974 until his retirement in 1999. The Baydas also have been Foundation donors for decades.

The connection is even more special for the long married couple, Eileen says. “Bud and I actually met when we were both working at the hospital, so we’re grateful for that.”

They’ve also been patients – following surgery Bud was in both the Rehab and Convalescent



Bud and Eileen Bayda won the Hospital Home Lottery's 50-50 jackpot in spring of 2021 and later made a generous gift to Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation.

Units; he’s also been a patient in the Eye Care Centre. About 10 years ago, Eileen’s gallbladder was removed at City Hospital.

Earlier, Bud was part of the team that saw City Hospital become the first in western Canada to use laparoscopy. “Elmer Schwartz [former CEO of the hospital] asked us to find \$300,000 to bring laparoscopic instrumentation to Saskatoon. I sat down with department heads and we made it happen.”

Part of the lottery winnings also went to renovate their Briarwood home so that Bud, who has suffered with kidney disease since 1970 and has mobility issues, would have an accessible ensuite. “Thanks to our winnings from the Hospital Home Lottery, Bud can look after himself,” Eileen says.

“We want to stay in our home as long as we can and that’s allowed us to do it,” adds Bud.

The Baydas have supported other causes, including an orphanage in the Ukraine and the Cameco Community Renal Health Centre, where Bud goes for dialysis.

“We plan to continue doing this, we’ve basically been doing things like it for a number of years but on a smaller scale,” Eileen says. “We now have the ability to do more. We’re both retired and living comfortable so we can.”

Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation thanks Bud and Eileen Bayda for keeping the hospital in their thoughts. □

City Park mother grateful for hospital emergency room, staff

A young mother of two is lavishing Saskatoon City Hospital with praise following a health emergency this past Easter.

"It was Good Friday and I just started not feeling well," says the City Park resident, who is executive director of the Saskatoon Club. "I have an autoimmune disease called Behcet's disease, so I'm cautious when I'm not feeling well."

Behcet's disease is a rare disorder that causes blood vessel inflammation throughout the body. In Buettner's case, which was discovered seven years ago, it causes her white blood cells to attack each other.

"I was having chest pains and knew something was wrong. But it was Good Friday and I knew no medical clinics were open. Because I live just across the street from City Hospital, I asked my family to watch my girls and walked over to emergency.

"I walked in and the waiting room was packed. I went to the admitting desk and told them about my chest pain and autoimmune disease. They told me to have a seat but I don't think I made it to a chair before a nurse came and told me to go with her."

It wasn't too long before Buettner was convinced she'd gone to the right place. "The nurse asked me to describe what was happening and immediately she understood. She had someone close with an autoimmune disease so knew what was going on.



After falling ill this past spring, City Park resident and mother of two Sarah Buettner is grateful for the Emergency Department at Saskatoon City Hospital.

"I was in a room within 20 minutes and the emergency doctor was there five minutes after. Behcet's is so rare that most people have never heard of it, not even my own GP. The ER doctor had never seen anyone with it but he knew about it and what to do. He also called rheumatologists from other hospitals."

She went through a series of tests including a CT scan, an ECG, x-rays, and numerous other tests, all "within the first maybe hour or hour-and-a-half that I was there. They also checked my vitals and put me on oxygen immediately. It was like the staff knew what was happening before I did."

Buettner spent the rest of the day in the emergency room at City

Hospital and was transferred later in the day to RUH. "But the staff was so amazing. They had nurses stay with me the whole time because I needed an ambulance transfer. I'd gotten worse through the day and was losing consciousness so they were pumping me full of steroids.

"The nurses just hung out with me. I remember cracking jokes all the time and them laughing. It was just a really good, special experience."

She spent 7 nights at RUH but is so grateful that the staff at City Hospital reacted as quickly and correctly as they did. "I feel very lucky that the ER was open and that the location was so convenient for me." □

You can provide the best for patients

While the main focus of the Foundation's current campaign is the City Hospital OR, there are also several other departments in the hospital that need your help.

The **Ambulatory Care** department "desperately" needs a new urodynamics machine, says urologist Dr. Kunal Jana.

He adds that the hospital no longer has a working urodynamics machine. "This means there are more than 250 patients awaiting testing. Urodynamic testing is required before they can proceed with the definitive treatment they need.

"The urodynamic equipment allows us to diagnose the functional health of the bladder," Dr. Jana explains. "With that information treatments can then be offered but, without that information, these patients continue to suffer debilitating issues such as voiding dysfunction, incontinence, or pelvic pain. In some cases this can lead to life-threatening renal failure."

City Hospital's **Emergency Department** is not open 24 hours a day but high usage of the city's other ERs means the department is not just sending patients away after hours.

As a result of heavy usage, the department needs a new wheelchair weigh scale and four new high-back patient chairs.

"We've been staying open more often than not through the night," reports Lori Bjorkman, manager of the Emergency Department.



Vein Viewers are useful for reducing the number of pokes intravenous patients have to endure. They're so well used at Saskatoon City Hospital that the Clinical Treatment Centre has asked for a second unit to keep up with demand.

"As a result, we're seeing a lot of patients who are elderly with mobility issues.

"The scale would help obtain an accurate weight measurement while having the patient stay in a chair or wheelchair without the risk of a fall. Having an accurate weight measurement is necessary for physicians to order weight-based medications or monitor fluid status more accurately, providing a higher quality of care for our patients."

The high-back chairs would give nursing staff the ability to mobilize this same patient population in a safe sturdy chair and not the a plastic unstable chair we currently have, she adds.

You can help patients get the answers they need sooner – your gifts will support the purchase of a Fluorescent In Situ Hybridization (FISH) platform for the hospital's **Anatomic Pathology Lab**.

FISH essentially is a laboratory-based test that captures a close-up picture of cells and genes. The information captured is not only useful in diagnosing certain cancers, it can also lead to better treatment decisions.

"This special technology will be used for diagnosing patients with sarcomas, brain cancers, or lymphomas right here in Saskatchewan," explains Dr. Mary Kinloch, division head of pathology at Saskatoon. "This will be instead of having to send patient tissue out of province for diagnosis, which results in patient delays. SCH will be the reference centre for this testing for all cancer patients of the province."

You can also help patients who receive frequent intravenous medications and treatments in the hospital's **Clinical Treatment Centre (CTC)**. The centre needs a second vein viewer. "The vein viewer is used with patients

who experience difficult IV starts,” reports Megan Ferguson, manager of Ambulatory Care.

“It assists in reduction of pokes for patients receiving iron infusions, phlebotomies, and medication infusions. We currently have one vein viewer, which is at least seven years old, but there are times when we need a second.”

There are other vein viewers in the hospital but, like the unit in CTC, these are in frequent use. Having a second unit will reduce waiting time and ensure patient comfort.

In the past few years, Foundation donors have purchased several pieces to enhance **Endoscopy** at Saskatoon City Hospital. This is crucial because of the vast array of procedures the department conducts, starting with general gastroscopies – to look at the esophagus, stomach and first

portion of the small intestine – and colonoscopies, which are scopes through the rectum to look at large intestine and lower portion of small intestine (ileum).


“We also do advanced procedures such as Radio Frequency Ablation (RFA),” says Endoscopy’s clinical coordinator Richard Le Tang. “These are normally used for patients who’ve had gastric reflux and developed what’s known as Barret’s esophagus, which can turn into cancer. Through RFA we go in with cautery pads and burn the abnormal tissue so that new, healthy tissue grows.”

Another noteworthy procedure is endoscopic ultrasound (EUS), he adds. “This procedure uses a flexible scope like a gastroscope. It can target tumours, lesions or masses and take tissue samples to be sent for analysis. It’s essentially

diagnostic testing without major surgery or exposure to radiation through MRI or x-ray.”

With 5,000 scoping procedures annually, Le Tang says it’s important to replace scopes frequently. “The ones we’re using now are seven years or older where average scope life is seven to five years. So, these are at or beyond the end of their lives.”

Le Tang says new scopes use advanced technology such as artificial intelligence that automatically recognizes abnormalities and places warnings on screen for physicians. “It catches things that might be missed so physicians can take a second look.”

To donate, visit SCHFgo.com or call 306-655-8489. 



You can help cancer patients: a Fluorescent In Situ Hybridization (FISH) platform will be used in the Anatomic Pathology Lab for diagnosing patients with potential sarcomas, brain cancers, or lymphomas.



Keep it flowing: Hospital's Operating Room needs new gas machines

Saskatoon City Hospital's Operating Room is the busiest in the city. It needs your support.

"The OR at City has 12 rooms while RUH and St. Paul's hospitals have eight," says Nicole Ladouceur, anesthetist assistant.

"The other two are doing longer surgeries such as cardiac at Royal University or organ transplants at St. Paul's. At City, because of the type of procedures, we're

doing as many as the two other hospitals combined."

Procedures at City Hospital include gynecology, urology, breast cancer, eye, and orthopedics. The latter category has five rooms dedicated to it because of the high number of operations required.

"We're doing more than 50 procedures every day and since the pandemic ended, we've

started to do more evening procedures and even surgeries on Sundays just to keep up with the demand," Ladouceur adds. "The SHA and government have a goal of reducing the orthopedic surgery wait list from two years to six months. We're all doing our best to meet that.

"As a result, Saskatoon City Hospital now sees six to eight people in every room every day we're operating. This means

we have a high change over in patients; it also means the OR equipment is being used and cleaned much more often."

This sheer volume of operations is why it's so important to maintain, replace and upgrade equipment before it breaks down or becomes unusable. If the latter happens, it will result in surgeries being postponed and patients waiting longer while lists grow.

That's why the Foundation is asking you to *keep it flowing*. Your gifts will purchase new anaesthetic gas machines and monitors in six surgery suites.

Ladouceur says, "we want to update our fleet of anesthetic gas machines and accompanying monitors in the OR. Having the newest equipment will ensure that we can continue doing the high volume of procedures."

Almost everyone is familiar with anaesthesia, she continues. "Anaesthetic drugs are vital because they keep patients from feeling pain during medical procedures. They ensure patients remain safely immobile, are unresponsive to surgical stimulation, remain unconscious, and don't remember procedures.

"That's why anaesthetics are administered by highly specialized medical doctors who control the amount of anesthetics and maintain patient safety during procedures. While this is happening, it's crucial to monitor patient vital signs. It's really their most important aspect of patient care in the operating room setting.

"The anaesthesia machine is the primary equipment needed in the operating room setting. This machine and its monitoring systems are responsible for patient life support during surgical procedures. There are several components involved in keeping a patient safe in a sleep-like state before and during surgery. While the function of the machine is to deliver oxygen, it also accurately mixes anaesthetic gases and vapours, and most important, it removes carbon dioxide from the breathing system. All of this is done to minimize anaesthesia-related risks to patients and staff."

The gas machine is a mechanical and pneumatic device that supplies the mixture of oxygen, gases, and anaesthetic agents to a patient. It's accompanied by a vital-sign monitoring system that records and displays functions such as heart rate, blood pressure, and oxygen saturations, temperature, and much more.

While donors, through the Foundation, recently helped replace gas machines and monitors in three OR suites, it needs six more of each to see that almost every room will have new or recently replaced equipment.

"Some of the equipment we're replacing has been used for more than 20 years," says Ladouceur, who's worked in the City Hospital OR since 1999. "These pieces are nearing their end of life and need to be replaced so we can meet the demand for surgeries."

Replacing equipment, naturally, has tremendous benefits, she

reports. "The AISYS gas machines and Phillips MX800 monitors are the latest models. The new machines have several updated features such as improved ventilation settings, which allows anaesthesia to be given quickly in an emergency. This can be reversed quickly when the procedure is over."

The new Phillips MX800 monitors have advanced monitoring capabilities and a larger screen making it easier to see. The vital signs modules are portable, allowing for continued monitoring while transporting the patient.

Ladouceur explains that, "new machines are virtual, so, instead of knobs to change settings like flow or oxygen, it's done right on the display screen. The screens are bigger and more user-friendly, so you just touch to change things. The improvement on ventilation is amazing. We can see and control everything better so it's safer for patients during and after surgeries."

She adds that all of the Operating Room staff are dedicated to meeting demand while ensuring patients' needs are met.

"Everybody will or everybody you know will at some point need surgery. Everyone in every group and from every walk of life will come to the OR at some point. That's why we want to make sure our hospital has the best."

To *keep it flowing*, visit SCHFgo.com. You can also call 306-655-8489 or drop by the Foundation office if you're in the hospital. □

Winter will see full slate of Foundation events again

The 2022-23 events season was a great one for the Foundation's four main special events – the Festival of Trees, the BHP Enchanted Forest, Swinging with the Stars, and the Nutrien Black Tie Bingo. It was the first time since the 2018-19 event season that all four events happened.

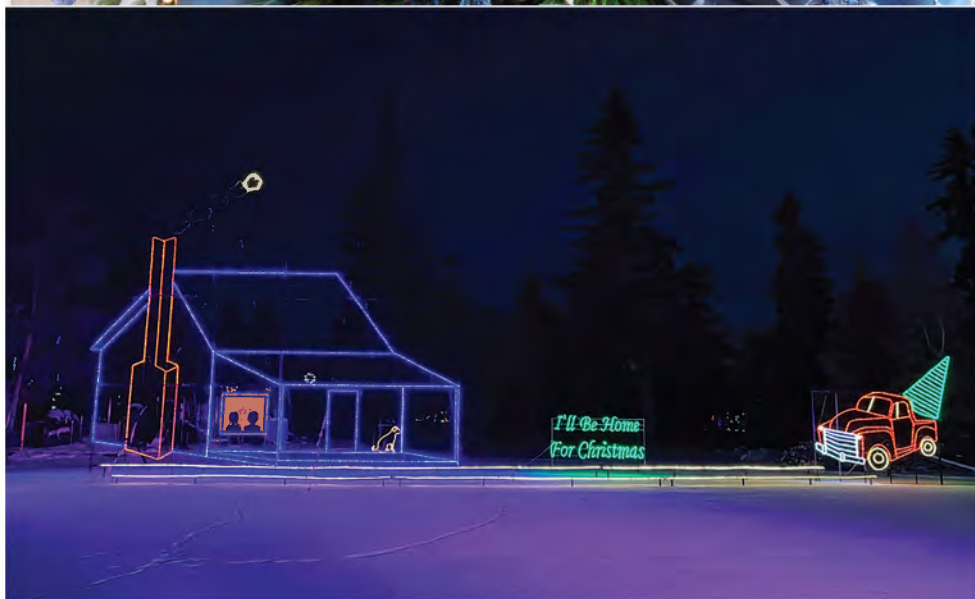
Your participation as a sponsor, prize donor, participant or attendee meant that more than \$500,000 was raised between the four events. And people had fun doing it. Thank you so much!

So, it's all happening again. It begins with a special presentation of the BHP Enchanted Forest. This year is the 25th year of the province's favourite winter attraction. The past quarter century saw two million visitors and \$4 million raised for the Saskatoon City Hospital and Saskatoon Zoo Foundations.

This year's Enchanted Forest runs from Nov. 18 to Jan. 7. You can see the return of classic displays such as Noah's Ark, The 12 Days of Christmas, and Santa's Sleigh. Joining these are newcomers – Home For the Holidays, The Grinch, and the Light Tunnel.

And stay tuned for the newest displays – because of this special milestone, organizers are promising something really spectacular. For more information, visit enchanted-forest.org.

The 2022 Festival of Trees presented a full program for first time since 2019. The result was more than 22,000 people attending the nine-day Festival.



Above: The Festival of Trees runs from Nov. 24 to Dec. 2. Below: The 25th year of the BHP Enchanted Forest is open from Nov. 18 to Jan. 7.

The 39th edition of the Festival takes place Nov. 24 to Dec. 2. The Western Development Museum will be transformed into a magical winter wonderland – explore beautifully decorated trees, wreaths, centrepieces, and more featuring whimsical winter, classic holiday, and family friendly displays lining the 1910 Boomtown street. Let your senses delight in the twinkling lights, while enjoying delicious gingerbread cookies or incredible displays at Gingerbread Lane.

Experience engaging entertainment like photos with Santa, Enchanted story time, free face painting, and character meet and greets at our Fantasy Castle.

Do you want to be a designer, sponsor or just want more information? Visit festival-of-trees.com to learn more.

The fun keeps going in the New Year when the 2024 Swinging with the Stars is presented at TCU Place on Sat. Jan 27. Eight

new celebrity dancers and their professional partners will hit the stage to compete for the coveted Crowd Favourite and Judge's Choice trophies.

In its 11th year, Swinging has raised \$1 million for the hospital!

If you want to be the first to know when dancers are announced, tickets go on sale, or voting opens, give Swinging a follow at facebook.com/SwtsSaskatoon/.

It was back for the first time in four years and it didn't disappoint. The sold out Nutrien Black Tie Bingo raised \$150,000.

You'll be pleased to know that the bingo returns in 2024. Circle Sat. March 16 on your calendar for another fun night of games and great prizes.

Do you want to revisit the 2023 Nutrien Black Tie Bingo? Or have you never been and want to see what it's about? Visit facebook.com/BlackTieBingoSCHF/ and watch the video made by Sik Pics. While you're there, be sure to give the page a like or follow.



Left: Swinging with the Stars returns on Saturday, Jan. 27. Right: Mark your calendars for Black Tie Bingo on Saturday, March 16.




If you're reading this in early fall, you may be in luck. There may still be Hospital Home Lottery tickets left for you to purchase.

This fall's grand prize is a \$1.5 million, 2,600 square foot home from Fraser Homes. The modern, two-storey house in Edgemont features four bedrooms, three-and-a-half bathrooms, vaulted ceilings, gourmet kitchen, and deck with custom pergola.

The early bird prize is a Warman Homes cottage at Candle Lake.

This modern rustic mountain chalet offers a vaulted pine ceiling, double-sided stone fireplace and 1,500 square feet on a treed lot.

Other major prizes are a private jet for six to Las Vegas, a 28-day self-driving tour of New Zealand, a \$10,000 Palliser shopping spree, and numerous vacations, leisure and home prizes. Don't forget the legendary 50/50 Add-On – last year's total reached \$1.24 million! Get your tickets at hospitalhomelottery.org. 



You can join the many Canadians now leaving Wills

A movement is building across the country. More than three million Canadians have left a gift in their Will to charity. These aren't celebrities or wealthy philanthropists, these are ordinary people who are using the power of their Wills to make a big difference in their communities.

This trend in "ethical Wills" has surged in the past three years, and it's no surprise. With so much change in the world highlighting new and growing needs, people are looking for more effective ways to make a big impact.

So, have you thought of including Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation in your Will?

The Foundation wants to let you know about this trend, because it's an all-around win. Here's why:

- You can make a major contribution to Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation
- You won't use any of the money you need now
- You'll still support your loved ones and inheritors in the future

As you may know, the Foundation has partnered with Will Power, a national campaign that educates Canadians about the power of leaving a charitable gift in their Will. They have a great tool, available at WillPower.ca to show how big an impact you can make.

The Will Power Legacy Calculator lets you see for yourself what even one percent of your estate can do. Try it yourself and you'll be surprised to see that you could



**Over 3M
Canadians
have now
left a gift in
their Will
to charity!**

leave gift for SCHF and still leave money for your family. You can find the legacy calculator at willpower.ca/legacy-calculator.

The Foundation knows you want to help where you can and make your mark in the world. This movement is about finding a way to do that, while still protecting your finances and family's future.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Foundation office at anytime.

Writing your Will

Are you one of the 49 per cent of Canadians who doesn't have a Will? Or maybe you do have a Will but there have been changes in your life and your Will is now no longer up to date? Among the top reasons that so many of us delay Will writing is the feeling that we're too young to worry about it, or that we don't have enough assets to justify making a Will in the first place.

These are valid concerns.

But there also are some real motivations to making a Will you might not be aware of, regardless of where you are in life.

The consequences of not having a Will

Dying without a Will could have serious implications for your family. For starters, with no Will in place, your assets could be distributed according to the laws of your province, which may exclude certain family members such as common-law spouses or step-children. Even if you feel you don't have a lot to pass on, you probably want to make sure what you do have is passed on to the people you love.

A Will is about more than just your possessions

If you put aside the natural apprehensions you may have about dying, making a Will can be an opportunity to have an open and insightful conversation

with your loved ones about life and legacy. Why not use this time to create a unique family legacy that is about more than just passing along possessions, but also ideas and values?

For example, perhaps your community has always played an important role in your family's life, and giving back to your community is a value that you all hold dear. You might choose to leave a small percentage of your estate to a neighborhood charity, making a contribution that future generations of your family can rally around and continue supporting in their own lifetimes.

A Will may not be the most exciting document you ever write, but as an exercise in collaboration, interaction, and empathy, it definitely could be one of the most meaningful.

So, why is writing a Will one of the kindest things you can do for your loved ones?

In a nutshell, it saves your family from unnecessary stress.


There is so much work to do when a loved one passes away, and at such a difficult time. Having your wishes made clear, and instructions laid out in your Will, can make a difficult time so much easier for the people you love.

And it's important to share your wishes with your family now so there won't be any surprises when you're gone. Knowing who is responsible for what and how assets will be allocated – to loved ones, business relationships, charitable organizations, etc. – helps create peace of mind for everyone involved.

So make estate planning a family affair, it sets a powerful precedent of trust and respect.

Writing a Will doesn't have to be expensive.

There are a whole range of options out there when it comes to making your Will. You may choose to use an online Will writing service if you have a relatively straightforward estate. Or choose a lawyer or notary if you'd like the advice of a professional who can give you more personalized advice (i.e. how to take advantage of tax incentives available when making a charitable gift in your Will).

If you have any questions, be sure to visit WillPower.ca or contact the Foundation office at 306-655-8489 or info@schfgo.com. 



WillPower.ca

Dr. Val Verge, MS Research Centre director

Dr. Valerie Verge has spent the last 40-plus years as a biomedical researcher. More than 30 of those years have been in Saskatchewan where she's served as executive director of the Cameco MS Neuroscience Research Centre in SCH (CMSNRC) since 2005.

But her Saskatchewan career wasn't planned and came only as the result of a chance encounter.

Even early in life Dr. Verge was interested in science and discovery, she says. "I was a curious kid. I was the kid who had to find all the Christmas presents, unwrap them, see what they were, and then put them back. I'm still very curious as an adult.

"What I'm doing now is the culmination of research started 43 years ago." Verge grew up in Montreal, and landed in Dr. Peter Richardson's lab after completing her BSc. "He was a neurosurgeon and renowned bench scientist at the Montreal General Hospital and he was brilliant.

"He pushed boundaries and taught me to develop simple, elegant models that would allow one to test hypotheses cleanly. He also taught me to trust the data and not only when it proved the positive hypothesis. He was the best mentor I could have asked for. I also had a rich support group of collaborators, really many of the best central and peripheral nerve regeneration people in the world."

Working in the lab, though, Verge became allergic to rodents and



Dr. Valerie Verge, director of the Cameco MS Neuroscience Research Centre, got her PhD from Montreal's McGill University. She planned to return there after a postdoctoral posting but life happened. Instead, Dr. Verge has spent more than three decades working in Saskatoon.

thought a bench science career wasn't to be. So, she obtained a computer programming certificate at McGill at night, but the research profession still beckoned. "My allergies became tolerable and I realized I was hooked on our research. So, I enrolled in McGill University's department of Neurology and Neurosurgery graduate program."

She graduated in 1990 with a PhD and a promising future. "McGill created an assistant professor position for me, and I had three other offers when I went to do postdoctoral work at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden. The McGill people told me to explore the other offers, but to come back to Montreal.

"They also told me, whatever I did, not to fall in love with a Swede," she says with a laugh. A plan in place, Verge pursued her chosen path but then life

happened. "I'd been in Sweden for about three months when I returned to Montreal for a bit, as my Mom had passed just before my going to Sweden. I sat beside this guy on the airplane who'd been in Norway and Sweden visiting relatives. His name was Ole Olson. He asked me all these neuroscience-based questions and knew way too much about one of the substances I'd worked with in my experiments, so I asked what he did.

"He said he was a farmer from Saskatchewan, a total science geek and the substance he knew so much about was grasshopper spray in his world, and that was that. I had to write to McGill and tell them it was worse than they could have imagined; that he farmed in Saskatchewan and we couldn't move the farm."

This was all to the benefit of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan.

Dr. Verge was hired into the U of S Anatomy and Cell Biology Department in the College of Medicine and rose to full professor over the next decade. In 1994 she helped create the CMSNRC and by 2006 she took on the role of director.

The CMSNRC allows a group of researchers dedicated to understanding more about the causes of and treatment for multiple sclerosis and other neurological challenges to thrive and collaborate, with the ultimate goal of finding a cure for MS. Dr. Verge collaborates closely with U of S, national, international and many CMSNRC investigators, including the Saskatchewan MS Clinical Research Chair, Dr. Michael Levin, and physicians in the hospital's MS Clinic.

"I'm privileged to be able to ask why for a living and to figure out puzzles, all with a great team of brilliant people."

Since coming to Saskatchewan in 1992, Dr. Verge has received numerous accolades, including being only the second female President of the Canadian Association for Neuroscience, served on multiple prestigious scientific bodies, and written or contributed to over a hundred scholarly articles.

For this latter endeavour she recently received an ultimate recognition. Stanford University listed Dr. Verge in the top two per cent of the most influential and highly cited scientists in the world.

The citation was based on how many other scientists have referred to her papers, and how

"I'm privileged to be able to ask why for a living and to figure out puzzles, all with a great team of brilliant people."

others have used her research. "It means others are looking at how our work has laid a foundation of understanding and how it has helped them to springboard forward, or that my work is recognized as a highly innovative way to interpret things," she says. "I was honoured to be on the list with 135 other U of S researchers."

In May this year Dr. Verge was named one of the top 250 Neuroscientists in Canada by Research.com. That recognition came at the same time as the publication of a highly important research study led by her team with her PhD student Nataliya Tokarska, as first author, Dr. Verge, as senior author, and Justin Naniong and Jayne Johnston (Verge lab members) and Drs. Hannah Salapa, Bogdan Popescu, Gillian Muir, and Michael Levin as co-authors.

The article reported exciting results of research examining effects of a novel treatment, Acute Intermittent Hypoxia (AIH), in a recognized mouse model of MS. The treatment involves cycles of breathing normal air alternating with air at about half the oxygen levels, Dr. Verge explains. "This beneficially stresses nerve cells, making them start to fire and turn on repair programs."

"We had been doing research on rodents with demyelinated nervous tissue or injured

peripheral nerves, where we showed electrical nerve stimulation (ES) which also makes nerve cells fire, greatly enhanced their ability to repair and remyelinate. But, ES is invasive, so we explored if we could obtain similar results with non-invasive AIH, already being used in spinal cord injury clinical trials. To our delight, AIH was as effective as ES in enhancing nerve repair including more speedy remyelination. So, we tried AIH in a mouse model of MS, where we hoped it would drive robust myelin repair and prevent neurodegeneration, two aspects of MS pathology for which there are a paucity of effective treatments. We started AIH treatment when the mice were at near peak disease, when there's lots of inflammation and demyelination, similar to when a patient has had an MS attack."

"We did just one week of once daily AIH treatment, then assessed the animals for an additional two weeks to see if the treatment effect held and saw repair like I've never seen in my 43 years of research. Every single indice of repair that we examined was beneficially changed. Inflammation went down by 80%, with the remaining 20% being switched into a more pro-repair state and there was evidence of robust remyelination and axon protection."

(continued on next page)

Foundation celebrates anniversary, hospital's opening

This year is the 40th anniversary of Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation and the 30th birthday of our beautiful building.

The Foundation celebrated by inviting staff and volunteers for cake on June 14. 700 people showed up and enjoyed their fill of white or chocolate or both.

Thanks to all who came out and especially thanks for all you do!




MS Researcher

(continued from previous page)

With that tremendous success, Dr. Verge says the research is being expanded. "These studies were initially done in female mice because MS is so prevalent in females, but now we are duplicating them in males. We also want to look at, if we intervene even earlier, can we prevent damage from happening or if, once an attack has happened, can we prevent it from happening again with AIH."

She says the ultimate goal is to transition this research to an AIH clinical trial for humans with MS. "The dream is that AIH will be an effective treatment to enhance repair following an MS attack, help prevent neurodegeneration and slow down disease progression."

To support the work of Dr. Verge and her team, donate at SCHFgo.com and direct your gift to the CMSNRC. 



Foundation welcomes new staff member

The Foundation is pleased to introduce Nicole Semko as director of Development.

Nicole joins SCHF from LutherCare Communities, where she was director of Marketing & Communications, which included overseeing the LutherCare Foundation. She brings with her 18 years of experience working in media (radio and television), and

led the Secret Santa Foundation as executive director for 10 years; she continues to serve on its board of directors.

Nicole and her husband, David, have two daughters. In her spare time, she enjoys travelling and photography.

Welcome, Nicole! 



IN MEMORIAM

Donations were made from April 1 to June 30, 2023 in memory of the following people:

Jean Penner Anderson
Sandra L. Bergen
Emily Dutchak
Don Elliott

Olga Hasselback
Marianne Kostyna
Mildred Lappas
Ron Leschyshyn

Peter Geoffrey Pybus
Ronald Swann
Martin & Elaine West
Marion Wilson

IN HONOUR

Donations were made from April 1 to June 30, 2023 in honour of the following people:

Kevin Colleaux

Dr. Rice

Dr. Ashley Selvig

Patrick & Anne Wallace - 50th Anniversary



MAKE A DIFFERENCE DONATE AT SCHFgo.com

IT'S EASY TO DONATE

It feels good to give. And it's easy, too, if you're wanting to give to Saskatoon City Hospital Foundation.

You can give in person at the Foundation office, next to the front entrance of Saskatoon City Hospital. You also can call 306-655-8489 or toll-free at 1-800-603-4464.

If you prefer online, you can give conveniently by visiting SCHFgo.com. You can see our latest equipment needs, check out donor stories, discover upcoming events, and view your options for legacy giving.

Finally, a great way to give is monthly giving. It saves you the trouble of writing and mailing cheques. Each month, a set amount is automatically deducted from your bank account or credit card and you receive one handy receipt at year-end. You can increase your donation or stop anytime by contacting the Foundation.

