

# Inspire

SPRING 2024

STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

## New Cardiac Care Campaign *Gets Major Boost from Municipal Hail Insurance*



*Municipal Hail Insurance CEO, Rodney Schoettler, Cardiology Division Lead, Dr. Andrea Lavoie, Regina Mayor, Sandra Masters, Saskatchewan Minister of Health, Everett Hindley, Saskatchewan Health Authority CEO, Andrew Will, and Hospitals of Regina Foundation President & CEO, Dino Sophocleous*

Cardiac care in Regina will reach greater heights, thanks to a new partnership between Hospitals of Regina Foundation and Municipal Hail Insurance. Municipal Hail Insurance has pledged to match donations from the community up to \$1 million, in support of the Foundation's new \$2.5 million *Cardiac Care Campaign* to upgrade technology in the second Catheterization (Cath) Lab at Regina's General Hospital. This exceptional commitment means every donor dollar will have double the impact.

The new campaign was launched on April 16<sup>th</sup>, at the Regina General Hospital, with a number of dignitaries in attendance, including the Minister of

Health, Everett Hindley and Regina's Mayor, Sandra Masters.

"Approximately 70% of patients at the Catheterization Lab come from outside Regina. A 2019 US study tracked the cause of death for farm workers between 1994 and 2019, concluding that 70% of farmer deaths were related to heart disease. This connection to our agricultural sector made Municipal Hail Insurance's support of the Cardiac Care Campaign a natural fit", said Rodney Schoettler, CEO of Municipal Hail Insurance.

Interventional cardiologists, working in our two Cath Labs, diagnose and treat coronary artery disease: critical heart

problems related to the blockage of blood vessels to the heart, helping thousands of people in our community. Created in 2006 as part of a \$6.2 million investment by the Foundation in the Mosaic Heart Centre, the first Cath Lab was upgraded in 2020. The Foundation will upgrade the second Cath Lab through our new Cardiac Care Campaign.

Last year, more than 2,400 procedures were completed in the Cath Labs at Regina's General Hospital, with more than 70% of those patients living in rural areas outside of Regina. With a growing need for procedures such as a transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI), a procedure that allows for a new heart valve to be implanted using a catheter, the upgraded technology will help our medical teams provide patients with the best cardiac care possible.

"This campaign will help us to significantly improve the level of cardiac care in southern Saskatchewan, thanks to the leadership and generosity of Municipal Hail and the support of our community", said Dino Sophocleous, president and CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation.



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# Mosaic Heart Centre *Gives Regina Man New Lease on Life*



*Craig Romanyk enjoying a beautiful day on the lake*

*“One word? Amazing!”*

Craig Romanyk didn't know much about our Mosaic Heart Centre, in Regina's General Hospital, prior to February of this year. That changed when doctors discovered he had a blocked artery, which would have led to a major heart attack if left untreated much longer.

“I'd been experiencing symptoms off-and-on for probably a couple of years”, says the retired Regina sales executive. “Finally, it got to the point where I'd be out of breath just taking the dog for a walk. My cardiologist ordered a stress test, which I subsequently failed miserably!”

That failed test in early February 2024 led to a visit to the Cardiac Catheterization (Cath) Lab at the Mosaic Heart Centre, where an angiogram revealed the full extent of the blockage. A decision to insert a stent to enable full blood flow to and from Craig's heart was made and the procedure was performed in the Cath Lab on February 28, 2024. Craig was able to go home to start his recovery the next day.

“Amazing! From the time I got to the hospital, I was blown away by the caring and professionalism of the staff”, Craig explains. “And thank goodness for the state-of-the-art technology that Hospitals of Regina Foundation donors help supply. Can you imagine? Having a heart procedure and going home the next day? One word: amazing!”

Heart disease and stroke account for almost 20 per cent of all deaths in Canada. Each year, thousands of people receive cardiac care in Regina. As one of only two cardiac centres, patients come from across the province to receive specialized care in our cardiac centre of excellence. Last year, doctors in the two Regina Cath Labs performed more than 2,400 procedures.

Investing in the best possible cardiac care is a priority for the Foundation. In 2020, the Foundation funded a technology update in one of our two Cath Labs.

“Now, the second Cath Lab needs to be updated”, says Lisa Green, senior

vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. “We are determined to deliver the best technology available to our Regina cardiac teams. That's why the Foundation has announced a new, \$2.5 million Cardiac Care Campaign to upgrade our second Cath Lab to meet the growing cardiac care needs of Saskatchewan and improve the heart health of our community.”

*“Thank goodness for the state-of-the-art technology that Hospitals of Regina Foundation donors help supply. Can you imagine? Having a heart procedure and going home the next day? One word: amazing!”*

Craig Romanyk

“I'm well on the road to recovery”, Craig explains. “And I owe it all to the amazing staff and technology at Regina's cardiac centre, and all of the Foundation donors and supporters who help make stories like mine possible. Thank you!”

## *A Ripple Effect of* Kindness and Love

Sometimes a seemingly small action can create a ripple effect, turning into a tidal wave of persistent impact beyond that initial moment. An amazing example of this are the efforts of Hospitals of Regina Foundation's Community Member and Pediatric Ambassador, 15-year-old Catherine Okolita.

At five years of age, Catherine and her mom made a trip to the park, like they had done many times before. This time they realized the park had become increasingly littered, and Catherine's mom decided they would not be going back until someone cleaned it up. This is when five-year-old Catherine thought to herself, "I'm someone! I can clean that park up for everyone." After recruiting a few willing friends and cleaning the park of litter, Catherine recognized the impact she could have on our community and created *Catherine's Cause* to promote her charitable work.

"I realized that the "someone" who could make a difference could be me, so I made up my mind to help and give back", Catherine explains. "It was around this same time that I heard the Z99 Radiothon in support of the Regina NICU on the radio, and I told my parents I too wanted to help those babies however I could."

Starting in 2013 and for the first three years of her fundraising efforts, Catherine made keychains which she

sold for \$10 each, with all profits going towards our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care, at the Regina General Hospital. In 2017, Catherine took her efforts a step further and launched the Catherine's Cause Facebook auction, which recently concluded its seventh on-line auction in 2024.

"I was absolutely amazed by the support from my friends, family, and the community when we started *Catherine's Cause*", Catherine explains. "I think it's important to spread kindness and in turn make the world a better place. Helping each other and giving back encourages people to be their best selves. Even a small donation, or giving a small amount of personal time, adds up to create that ripple effect of kindness and love."

Over the last nine years of *Catherine's Cause* supporting Hospitals of Regina Foundation and the Z99 Radiothon, Catherine has raised more than \$342,000 for our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Thanks to this incredible contribution, countless babies have received the life-saving care they needed, right here at home.

"We are grateful for the support Catherine has shown the Foundation and our NICU," says Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "We consider ourselves extremely fortunate



*Catherine Okolita*

to have such a dedicated and hardworking community member and pediatric ambassador who leads by example."

# Celebrating 30 Years Of *An Evening in Greece* Gala



On March 16, 2024, more than 700 attendees gathered for one of Regina's premier fundraising galas while also celebrating a remarkable milestone: the 30th anniversary of the *An Evening in Greece* Gala. Held annually, the gala has become a cherished tradition, uniting people from all walks of life in a celebration of Hellenic heritage, hospitality and philanthropy, in support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation.

At the helm of the event's success is a dedicated volunteer organizing committee led by Spiro Bonis and Thomas Siarkos. Their unwavering commitment and tireless efforts have been instrumental in shaping the gala into the memorable event it is today. Year after year, the organizing committee devotes countless hours to planning and coordinating every aspect of the event, ensuring a seamless and memorable experience for all of those in attendance.

Central to the gala's success over thirty years is its vibrant celebration of Hellenic culture. From the incredible performances of traditional dances to the culinary delights of Greek cuisine, guests are taken on a journey through Greece, while supporting a great cause right here at home.

Beyond the festivities, the *An Evening in Greece* Gala holds a deeper significance as a way of giving back to the community. This year's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala raised an incredible \$214,000, including an amazing \$70,000 donation by Kevin Knight and Knight Cares, increasing its



*The An Evening in Greece Gala organizing committee*

**"At the core of our mission lies our desire to give back to the community we proudly call home. Great local health care is essential for our people; we consider it our duty to continue to support Regina's Hospitals..."**

Spiro Bonis

total support for our hospitals to over \$1.35 million.

"At the core of our mission lies our desire to give back to the community we proudly call home," asserts Spiro Bonis. "Great local health care is essential for our people; we consider it our duty to continue to support Regina's hospitals to

help deliver the technology they need to serve our community."

For three decades, the *An Evening in Greece* Gala has been one of Regina's premier fundraising galas celebrating culture, cuisine, and community impact in Regina. As it looks to the future, the organizing committee hopes to ensure that its legacy of giving and celebration lasts for generations to come.

"We extend our deepest gratitude and congratulations on 30 years of community impact through this incredible event," Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation says. "The extraordinary efforts of these amazing volunteers, whose dedication breathes life into the gala year after year, cannot be overlooked. We thank them for their commitment and wish them many more years of continued success."



## *Mother and Baby are Doing Fine, Thanks to Regina's Hospitals*

Sharla Rich's fourth pregnancy was a fairly routine one, although the Weyburn mom of three had felt sicker than with any of her previous pregnancies. However, on August 13, 2023, things took a dramatic turn. Luckily for Sharla and her unborn daughter, world-class help was a short drive away, in the form of the medical teams at Regina's General Hospital.

"I woke up at 3 a.m. that Sunday morning and I was bleeding. My urine was full of blood. I remember being rushed to the hospital in Weyburn. Next thing I knew, I woke up at Regina's General Hospital two days later. My baby, Xola, had been delivered via C-section while I was out and was being looked after in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at the Rawlco Centre for Mother Baby Care. That was the start of our adventure", shares Sharla.

Sharla had developed a rare condition called placenta percreta, where the placenta had slipped out of the uterus and adhered to the wall of her bladder. It is a rare but potentially life-threatening complication. In Sharla's case, it required four surgeries, 17 blood transfusions and some time spent in a medically-induced coma.

The condition is so rare, doctors in Regina had to consult with their counterparts in Toronto for guidance. Sharla needed care from our medical

teams at the Regina General Hospital for five weeks to recover. Eventually, on September 16th Sharla was given the all clear, to the relief of her family. Then it was just a matter of healing and recovering, while waiting for Xola to be strong enough to join her older brother and sisters at home.

While her Mom was receiving life-saving care, baby Xola was under the watchful eyes of the team in our NICU. She was born at 27 weeks, weighing only 2.3 pounds.

"I will never be able to say enough good things about the medical teams at RGH", Sharla says. "While I was recovering, they took such fantastic care of Xola. They treated her like she was a member of their own families. I don't know if either of us would be here today without them."

Fortunately, Xola was fairly healthy but, being born early, her lungs were not fully developed and she needed time on a C-PAP machine in order to help her lungs grow strong enough to breathe on their own. On December 8, after 117 days in the NICU and the pediatric special care nursery, Xola was discharged.

"This was the best Christmas our family had in years", Sharla confides. "The medical teams gave us the ultimate present – our family was healthy and together for Christmas.



*Sharla and Xola Rich*

I want to thank them, and the many supporters of Hospitals of Regina Foundation, who help equip the NICU with the best possible technology. You are literally lifesavers."

"It's wonderful to hear that Sharla, Xola, and their family are thriving, thanks to our community's support of local health care", says Lisa Green, senior vice-president, Hospitals of Regina Foundation. "The Foundation is proud to work with all our donors to help ensure that children and their families across southern Saskatchewan can live better lives."

# Celebrating the 2024 Spring Home Lottery Winners

Once again, the 2024 Hospitals of Regina Foundation Spring Home Lottery showcased the unwavering support of our community for Regina's hospitals. Thanks to this incredible support, the 2024 Spring Home Lottery SOLD OUT, and for an incredible seventh consecutive lottery, our 50/50 Add-On exceeded \$1 Million! This remarkable commitment to healthcare in southern Saskatchewan underscores the generosity and giving nature that is ingrained in our province.

The proceeds generated from our spring lottery will help us deliver on our 2024

\$7.5 million commitment to invest in areas of greatest need in Regina's hospitals, which serve all of southern Saskatchewan.

We are delighted to unveil the winners of the 2024 Spring Home Lottery. Delwyn Jansen from Humboldt is this year's big winner, winning the keys to the Ripplinger Homes built \$1.4 Million Grand Prize Showhome, along with \$50,000 CASH. The Early Bird draw winner is Gaylene Drew of Regina who won the choice between a European Adventure or \$100,000 CASH. Additionally, Dana

and Don Soloninko of Wroxtton won big and are taking home \$559,187 CASH from another incredible \$1 Million plus 50/50 Add-On prize, while Clarence and Margaret Delainey of Regina won their choice of a 2024 Audi Q3 45 TFSI Komfort or 2024 MINI Cooper Countryman S All4 or \$50,000 CASH!

Congratulations to all winners in the 2024 Spring Home Lottery! Your continued support allows us to deliver the best health care possible so the people of Regina and southern Saskatchewan can live better lives.



**Top left:**

*Delwyn Jansen, winner of the Grand Prize Showhome and \$50,000 cash, with Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation*

**Top right:**

*Dana and Don Soloninko, winners of \$559,187 from the 50/50 Add-On, with Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation*

**Bottom left:**

*Clarence and Margaret Delainey, winners of the Cash or Cars Prize, with Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation*

**Bottom right:**

*Gaylene Drew, winner of \$100,000 cash from the European Adventure Early Bird Prize, with Dino Sophocleous, president & CEO, Hospitals of Regina Foundation*



## Celebrating *Our Community's Giving Spirit*



The giving spirit of the individuals, organizations and businesses that support Hospitals of Regina Foundation is outstanding. Time and time again, these caring and generous partners gather together to raise funds for Regina's hospitals in new and exciting ways! Whether through a gala event, a donation at the till campaign, a golf tournament or a marathon, people step up and support health care for those who need it most. The Foundation is grateful for our community's support because nothing we do happens without you.



Thanks to many amazing volunteer organizers, here are some of the fundraising activities that took place between December 2023 and April 2024 in support of Hospitals of Regina Foundation:

- McDonald's Donation at the till - \$30,000
- Long & McQuade Donation at the till - \$1,275
- Coldwell Banker Local Realty - \$10,000
- High Noon Optimist Club Comedy Magic Show - \$10,000
- Action Sewer and Drain - \$1,000
- Local Bands for Tiny Hands – \$15,783
- Pure Country 92.7 Snow Pitch - \$10,000
- An Evening in Greece Gala – \$214,000
- Z99 Radiothon – \$511,698
- Chinese Spring Festival Celebration – \$11,650

### CONNECT

To learn how you can host your own fundraiser, visit our website [hrf.sk.ca/Events/Host-An-Event](http://hrf.sk.ca/Events/Host-An-Event), or contact Brienne Moore, development officer at 306-781-7501 or by email at [brienne.moore@hrf.sk.ca](mailto:brienne.moore@hrf.sk.ca).

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It is shaping up to be a busy year! Please join in the fun at these upcoming events! Follow our social media pages to keep up to date on how to get involved by purchasing tickets, or supporting our volunteers' efforts through donations.

- CCU 5KM Walk/Run – May 25, 2024
- Four Seasons Ball – June 1, 2024
- Bigfoot 50 Trail Run – June 16, 2024
- Motorcycle Ride for the Boys – June 23, 2024
- Eric Calibaba Memorial Golf Classic - July 19, 2024
- Mexican Scramble Golf Tournament – August 25, 2024
- GMS Queen City Marathon – September 6-8, 2024
- Uncover the Cure Cocktail Party – September 12, 2024



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