RIVERVIEW HEALTH CENTRE

HEALTH VIEWS

December 2015 • Edition 1

A Publication of Riverview Health Centre

TURNING CROWDFUNDING UPSIDE DOWN

At Riverview Health Centre

Riding a bicycle is a learned skill, but once you know how, you know it for life. IT'S THE SAME WITH GENEROSITY. Riverview Health Centre Foundation Executive Director Sheldon Mindell says that once people experience giving, they will enjoy the feelings that come from donating. Sheldon answers a few questions about philanthropy and explains how he wants to apply Crowdfunding to the Foundation's fundraising initiatives.

Q What are you hoping for?

SM It's the right time of the year to make a Christmas wish list. Here's mine: I'd like everyone to be healthy and happy and make a good living. And I'd like people to **SHARE THEIR BOUNTIES** – however large or small – with Riverview Health Centre Foundation.

Q Why Riverview?

SM All money raised by the Foundation **GOES TO MAKING LIFE BETTER** for the patients and residents in the 387 beds at the health centre. These beds are filled by people living with cancer, dementia, respiratory problems, brain injuries, stroke and other issues. Some stay for a few days, others for weeks or months, and still others for the rest of their lives.

If you go to a hotel for one night and the surroundings are not up to your standards, you put up with it. But if you are going to stay there for weeks, months or years, you find a better hotel. It's the same with the patients and residents of Riverview; as well as exceptional care, they deserve **WELL APPOINTED ACCOMMODATIONS** during their stay at Riverview.

Q How can people give?

SM We have many donors who make a habit of sending a monthly or quarterly gift to Riverview; others support our fundraising activities. People can also give through our Circle of Life Planned Giving Program, which allows them to **COMMIT** to and receive **RECOGNITION** for a donation **TODAY** by making arrangements to leave a donation through their estate.

Q What are the benefits of planned giving?

SM People are afraid of outliving their resources – no one knows how long they are going to live and how much money they will need. A planned gift solves that dilemma because you **DON'T HAVE TO PUT OUT MONEY TODAY.** By donating an exact amount or a percentage of your estate, you can fulfill your philanthropic wishes without impacting your standard of living today.

All donations made through your estate are **TAX DEDUCTIBLE.** Your heirs will be forever grateful for the reduction in your end of life tax bill, while the residents and patients at Riverview will be forever grateful for your donation.

Q What is Crowdfunding?

SM Crowdfunding is when a **LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE** donate to a **SHORT TERM** emergency situation. We decided to turn that definition upside down and apply it to our Circle of Life program: we want a **LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE** to focus on planned giving for the **LONG TERM BENEFIT** of patients and residents at Riverview. Here's what can happen:

- If 1,000 supporters make a planned gift in their will of $1,000 each, then Riverview would have **$1 MILLION** to spend on improving the lives of our patients and residents.
- If 10,000 supporters each give $1,000, we'd have **$10 MILLION!** Just imagine!

Sheldon Mindell

Q How can people start?

SM In this newsletter, you will find **A COMMITMENT LETTER** to join Riverview's Circle of Life. By filling out this letter and mailing it in the enclosed envelope, you are promising to leave a planned gift to the Foundation. My hope is that you and 9,999 other people will call their lawyers and say: "Add Riverview Health Centre Foundation to my list of beneficiaries."

Will you take up this challenge? Learn to GIVE TODAY, and you'll never forget how. Riverview Health Centre will be a better place as a result of your generosity.

Mail the "promise" letter (see page 8) in the provided envelope so you can be recognized on our Circle of Life Donor Wall.

RIVERVIEW HEALTH CENTRE

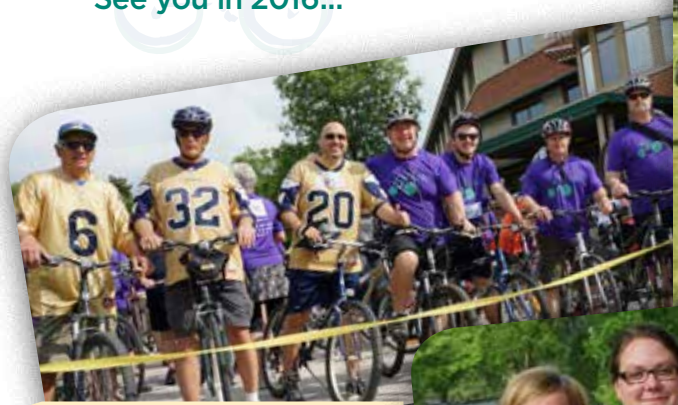
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:

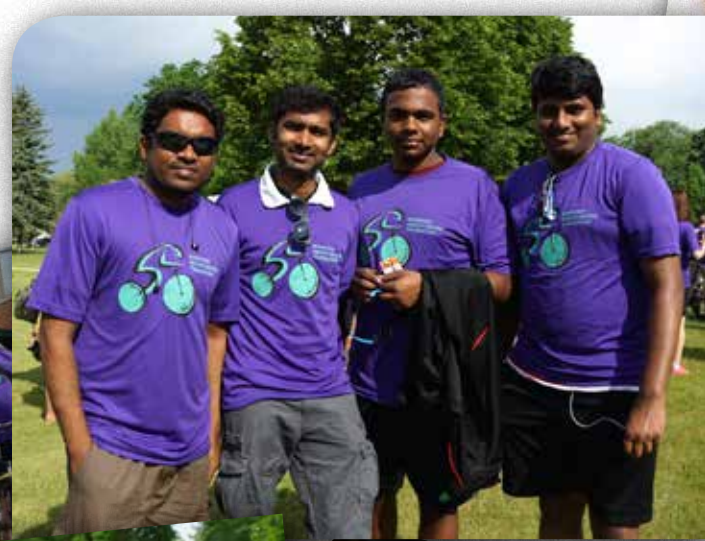
Riverview Health Centre Foundation
One Morley Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3L 2P4

Riverview Health Centre Foundation

Cycle on Life 2015

These pictures say:
"The Cycle on Life was a big success! Thank you! See you in 2016..."





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Resident Participation

Congratulations to the residents of 2 East and 2 West for participating in the 2015 Cycle on Life by riding four stationary bikes.

Each participant trained for the month leading up to the event, and they all raised pledges online. On the day of the event, they took turns on the bikes, taking 30 to 40 minute rides each. The bikes were placed in a gym that looks out onto the courtyard, so the residents could see all the other Cycle participants as they arrived at the finish line.

This is the first time residents have taken part in the Cycle on Life. The idea came from Doreen Parisien, who brought it forth to a resident council meeting. Doreen passed away last year, but her idea lives on, and residents plan to make this an annual event. Cudos to the following:

Ricky Bains
Gillian Lind
Marlene Louden
Caroline Miles
Ernest Paterson
Craig Penzick
Wilfred Shorting
William Webster
Gloria Weiderman

Thank You to the Sponsors and Supporters of the 2015 Tree of Lights Concert & Celebration

You have helped to brighten the holiday season for patients and residents while raising funds for recreational opportunities at Riverview.

Farewell to a Great Supporter of Riverview Health Centre

Matthew (Matt) Jones, the first Chair of the Riverview Health Centre Board, passed away peacefully on March 15, 2015. A highly regarded chartered accountant, Matt used this knowledge for Riverview's benefit. In addition to serving one term as Chair, he remained as a Board member for eight years during the 1990s when the Centre was undergoing its redevelopment.

Matt was the beloved husband of Drin Jones and father of Marsha, Colin and Tyson.

Riverview extends condolences to the Jones family. Matt's leadership while assisting Riverview to meet its goals will always be fondly remembered.

Riverview Health Centre Foundation was named as a recipient of donations in memory of Matt.

Matthew Jones

FACES *at Riverview*

Financial Expertise

Derek Innis

FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBER

Derek Innis became a member of the Riverview Health Centre Foundation Board in January 2013. His favourite part of this endeavour is giving back to the community.

Three of Innis' grandparents have been affected by Alzheimer's disease, so he is well aware of the care required to assist individuals with dementia. He was attracted to Riverview because he knew about the great facilities and services the Centre has to offer people in this situation. "Redevelopment of the Alzheimer's and dementia units is one of the things the Foundation is working on," he says. "Because our family has been affected by this disease, I wanted to help."

Innis sits on the Finance and Planned Giving Committees of the Board. A chartered accountant by trade, he has a professional background in estate and tax planning. As well, he has led annual senior citizens' tax clinics for several years, filing taxes for low-income seniors free of charge. These skills and experiences come into play in his role as a Board member.

When asked about some of his most memorable times so far at Riverview, Derek mentions the events in which he has been involved. "I've participated in the Cycle on Life, and this year's first annual Bocci Ball Tournament was a great way to spend a summer afternoon," he says. "It's fun to participate while helping to raise money that will enrich the lives of patients and residents at Riverview."

Innis is a partner with MNP's Taxation Services Group in Winnipeg, and he is happy to use his skills and qualifications to help Riverview Health Centre. He enjoys working with other professionals for a worthwhile cause: "We all bring things to the table," he says.

Moving Ahead

Marilyn Kapitany

CHAIR, RIVERVIEW HEALTH CENTRE BOARD

An economist by training, Marilyn Kapitany is adept at looking at the whole picture and discerning what is important to an organization. As the incoming Chair of the Riverview Health Centre Board, Kapitany will have ample opportunity to use these skills.

Starting her tenure at Riverview as a Board member in 2011, Kapitany soon became the Chair of the Ethics Committee. "Being on this committee gave me a good sense of the culture at Riverview," she says. "I could see that the environment was respectful and positive for everyone, including residents, families and staff."

She also served as Chair of the Corporate Development and Communications Committee before accepting the position of Chair of the Board in September 2015, taking over for outgoing Chair Dal McCloy.

Kapitany brings a vast amount of strategic planning experience in both the public and the non-profit sectors. She spent 31 years in senior level positions in the public service, including assistant deputy minister of Western Economic Diversification and a tenure with Indian and Northern Affairs. An active volunteer, Kapitany has been involved with various organizations, including the Y, locally and nationally. She is currently Canada's representative to the World Alliance of YMCAs.

Kapitany looks forward to moving ahead with the redevelopment of the Alzheimer's and Dementia Units and sees many other great possibilities at Riverview. She claims that she was lucky to be chosen to be on the Board of this forward thinking health centre. It goes the other way, too: Riverview is lucky to have her.

Board of Directors

RIVERVIEW HEALTH CENTRE

Marilyn Kapitany
CHAIR

Darren Klassen
VICE-CHAIR

Shawna Pachal
TREASURER

Rod Stephenson
MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Norman R. Kasian
SECRETARY

Kevin Bolt
Vince Cerasani
Phillip Cesario
Rod DeVos
Terryl Luhowy
Doug McNeil
Tracy Nelson
Bob Nyhof
Adrian Schulz
Dr. Ian Smith
Doug Thomson

Dal McCloy Honoured

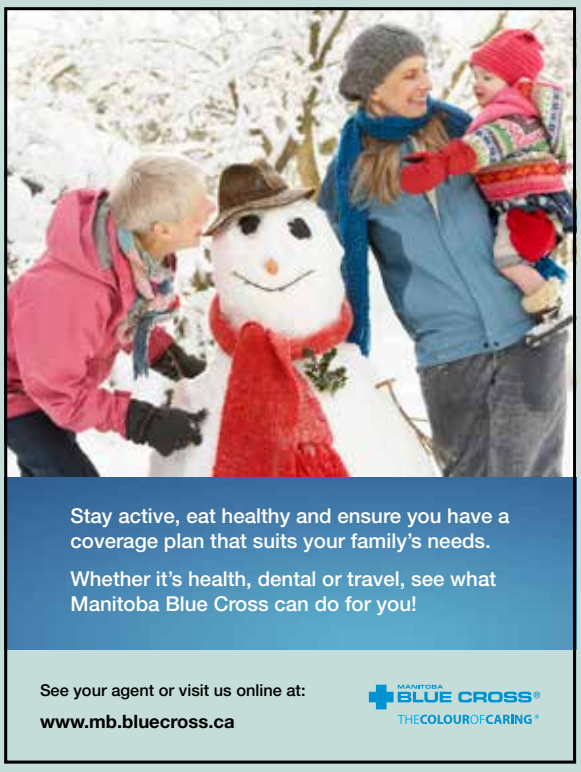
The Board Room in the Princess Elizabeth Building has a new name: it is now known as McCloy Hall in honour of Dal McCloy.

As one of the Centre's founding Board members, McCloy served for 18 years, including two long terms as Board Chair. He was also a member of the Riverview Health Centre Foundation Board, as well as Chair of the Major Gifts Committee.

McCloy continues to be a generous supporter and a tireless advocate of Riverview. Everyone will miss his energy and dedication, as well as his contagious enthusiasm and altruistic actions.

Best wishes to Dal McCloy as he embarks on the next stage of his life in Calgary.

Thanks to CJNU Nostalgia Radio 93.7 FM for broadcasting at Riverview Health Centre during the month of November.



Manitoba Public Insurance

The Riverview Health Centre Foundation

is grateful for the support of Manitoba Public Insurance towards the 2015 Cycle on Life.

THANK YOU!

Long Service and Retiring Employees

Each year, Riverview Health Centre honours its long service and retiring employees with a recognition ceremony, awards presentation and dinner. Congratulations to the following who, in 2015, reached their milestones.

CONGRATULATIONS, RETIREES!

Marites Alfonso
Pamela Bager
Merrilynne Bjornson
Lorraine Bremault
Anna Ciarelli
Ruth Geauvreau
Darcy Hastman
Mike Howanyk
Jesus Malicdem
Teresita Malicdem
Miriam Martin
Dorothy McBride
Leteselasie Mesgun
Tuyet Nguyen
Kevin Partridge
Jim Putz
Lynn Renn
Carol Robinson
Lucie Schlichter
Geraldine Sowa
Mark Strople
Grace Timmerman
Anna Vesna
Tina Whittom

LONG SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

35 Years of Service
Susan Akins
Gail Boyce
Ofelia Bredonia

25 Years of Service
Arlene Bakker
Colette Dillman
Charmagne Free
Carole Hamel
Dominique Landers
Ana McNally
Cecilia Oduro

20 Years of Service
Melecio Acosta
Perry Bulos
Sandra Campbell
Isabel Delaine
Valerie Earl
Regino Labao
Rita LeClaire
Terrie Leppky
Cheryl Lindsay
Tehetena Messele
Dana Orr
Pauline Sharpe
Korisha Sorensen

15 Years of Service
Helen Blonski
Jackie Borys
Emerson Brewster
Tena Cayanan-Gauthier
Cheryl Christopher
Heli Dedi
Lucie Emerson
Bonny Guibault
Dela Irwin
Diane Korbaylo
Paula Kowalski
Malcolm McKenzie
Andrea Meakin
Nicole Melizza
Perla Mercado
Kristie Peters
Helen Regalado
Edwin Ryden
Rachael Ryden
Michael Shumsky
Dwight Wilson

10 Years of Service
Isha Bangura
Cara Cabral
Melanie Davis
Teresa Dudar
Barbara Greengrass
Melissa Houlahan
Lisa Houston
Jennifer Jobin
Tammy Kelts Hillier
Yolanda Kimhai
Mandi Lemieux
Lennea Leszkovics
Diana Lewis
Ann Marie Lisney
Andrea Lynch
John MacDonald
Farida Malik
Virginia Maulas
Wilma Mendoza
Rowell Sagun
Alissa Schroeder
Laura Vandurme

Celebrating **30 Years of Service** are (left to right): Alice Mignon-Marrast, Connie Bergstresser, Suzanne Landry, Judy Webster and Sheila Beaudry.

Foundation Executive Director Sheldon Mindell (left) and Riverview Board member Derek Innis (center) with Frank Wade.

2nd Annual
Wade Wealth Classic Invitational

The Pine Ridge Golf Course was the location of a fun round of golf in support of Riverview Health Centre. Golfers were invited to participate as guests of long time supporter Frank Wade, who enjoys the opportunity to thank his clients while directing charitable giving back to a facility that is well respected for providing the best possible care for its patients and residents. For the second year in a row, the event raised over $32,000 from Wade's clients for capital projects at Riverview.

Foundation Holds First Annual
Bocce Ball Tournament

The park area in front of the Princess Elizabeth Building on Riverview Health Centre's grounds was transformed into a festive outdoor event venue on August 19. On that day, 23 four-person teams participated in the Centre's first Bocce Ball Tournament to raise money for the Foundation.

"Riverview has beautiful grounds and in the summer it's like a park, with flower beds, green lawns and mature trees," says **Jon Ljungberg,** Special Events Coordinator at the Riverview Health Centre Foundation. "We wanted to initiate a new event that would give people a chance to experience this scenery while keeping costs to a minimum so more money can go directly to the health centre.

The event was a resounding success and it was the first corporate bocce ball tournament in Winnipeg. It attracted a menagerie of costume-clad supporters who tossed and rolled their way through a sunny summer afternoon. "People wore everything from goofy hats to knickers to Hawaiian shirts and leis...they were out to have a good time," says Ljungberg.

As bocce ball has Italian roots, some people from Winnipeg's Italian community were quick to come on board to assist. **Joe Grande,** owner of **Mona Lisa Ristorante Italiano** (the title sponsor), provided serving staff for five hours, beautiful table settings and two chefs to prepare great appetizers.

For information and to sign up for the 2016 Riverview Health Centre Foundation Bocce Ball Tournament, contact Jon Ljungberg at 204-478-6220 or at jljungberg@rhc.mb.ca

Pino Pisano, a local bocce ball aficionado, set up the play area, supplied the scoring materials and gave tutorials to participants (most of whom had never before played the game). A volunteer with inner city youth, Pisano also arranged to have students come to help with scoring and registration.

The grounds were set up with festival tents and the area was fenced off, courtesy of **Wallace & Wallace.** Teams would get breaks in play, at which time they could have a drink at the open bar featuring wine provided by **G.J. Andrews** and beer supplied by the **Fort Garry Brewing Company.** Participants were entertained by **DJ Gopher the Music** and by **Italian dancers** provided by **Folkorama.**

Ljungberg says it was like being at a back yard party. "Everyone had such a great time that we're already signing up teams for next year," he says. And best of all, the bocce ball tournament raised $13,000 for Riverview, a substantial amount for a first-time event. ●

RIVERVIEW CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC AND RAY POITRAS MEMORIAL

What happens when you merge two good things? You get one GREAT thing, and that's what happened when Riverview's Annual Charity Golf Classic joined forces with the Ray Poitras Memorial Tournament. Friends of Ray Poitras have held a tournament in his honour since 2007, directing funds to Riverview to show appreciation for the care Ray received before he passed away. This year's merged event was held at Larters Golf and Country Club; it attracted 120 golfers, along with corporate and individual sponsors who raised money for the Centre's Alzheimer's and Dementia Units.

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Riverview Health Centre Foundation
Centre Stage Gala 2015

Thank you to all of our supporters! You helped raise a great deal of money for the redevelopment of the Alzheimer's and Dementia units. See you next year!

Thanks to Our Sponsors!

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Siemens Canada Inc.

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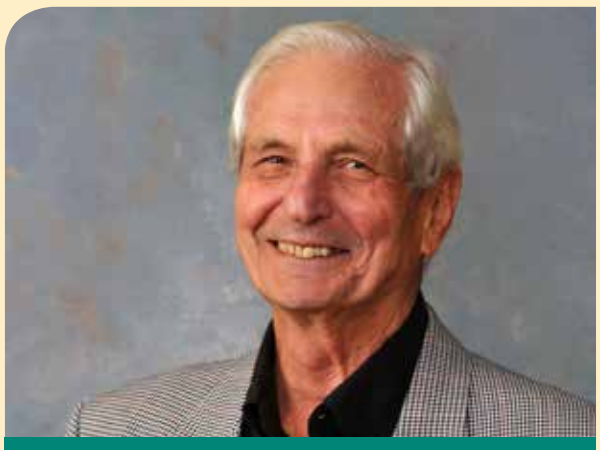
Riverview Health Centre initiated the **FRIENDS OF RIVERVIEW AWARD** in 2012 to honour individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their support of the Centre. Bill Brownstone and the late Neil Bardal are this year's recipients.



Bill Brownstone

FRIENDS OF RIVERVIEW AWARD RECIPIENT

Many Years of Service

At the 2015 Centre Stage Gala held on October 7th, Bill Brownstone was honoured as one of two recipients of the Friends of Riverview Award.

Brownstone's history with Riverview is long, but his most enduring legacy is the Riverview Health Centre Foundation's Cycle on Life. The seed for this event was planted in 1998 when Brownstone got the idea after witnessing a similar fundraiser in Toronto. The next year, he and the late Neil Bardal (see below) founded the event, which draws crowds of supporters each year as it continues to grow.

Not only did Brownstone help spearhead an event that has raised over $1.5 million to date, but his involvement with Riverview began even before his Board membership. In the 1990s he assisted in a marketing capacity: he was one of the committee members charged with rebranding the King George, King Edward and Princess Elizabeth Hospitals into Riverview Health Centre.

Brownstone's philanthropic nature goes deep into the Winnipeg community, and his charitable activities include many deserving organizations. Riverview is proud to be one of them.

The Late Neil Bardal

FRIENDS OF RIVERVIEW AWARD RECIPIENT

Keen Eye for Fundraising

Family members of the late Neil Bardal, founder of Neil Bardal Funeral Centre and long-time volunteer Board member at Riverview Health Centre, were a proud bunch on the night of the Centre Stage Gala on October 7th. They were in attendance to accept the Friends of Riverview Award on Bardal's behalf.

Bardal joined the Riverview Health Centre Board of Directors in 1998 and served until 2009. Possessing a keen eye for fundraising, he encouraged donors to give to the Legacy of Care Campaign in the 1990s, which raised money for home-like surroundings in the redeveloped health care centre. The campaign, which was only expected to raise $30,000, brought in $1.3 million, enriching the lives of patients and residents.

Bardal also partnered with fellow award recipient Bill Brownstone (see above) to initiate the Cycle on Life in the late 1990s. He cycled in every event except one. Foundation Board Chair Bob Brennan notes that, even after his radiation treatment, Bardal arrived in cycling shorts and a helmet to ride the circuit in the June 2009 event.

Bardal was a major force in promoting Icelandic culture in Manitoba. He was invested with the Order of Manitoba in 2006 by Lieutenant Governor John Harvard.

In Honour of and In Memory of donations

Donations can be made to Riverview Health Centre Foundation as memorial gifts, honorariums or to commemorate special occasions and important milestones. Gifts listed below were received between Sept. 1, 2014 and Oct. 31, 2015. The names of the individuals being acknowledged through a donation are in bold. Donors' names follow.

IN HONOUR OF

The Late Neil Bardal
George Chapman

Bill Brownstone
Arthur Blankstein & Ken Uhre
Terry & Andrea Braunstein
Louis & Marcia Cogan
Mel & Arlene Fages
Max Hochman
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Ivy Kopstein & Murray Palay
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Jerome Breslaw

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Bob Sokalski
David Christianson & Vera Steinberger

3 West Staff
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Murray Strong
Valerie Strong

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Helen Whetter

Ian Wright
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Beverly Knight

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Ron Appleyard
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Wanda Barringer

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Marissa Pasquarelli

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Florence Blanchard

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Ian Blicq
Connie & Rex Blamey
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Robert Jackson
Margaret Jones
Joan King & Roy Hood
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Donald Little
Lana McGimpsey
Janet McLean & Richard South
Jean McRae
Margaret & John Mundie
Suzanne Pelletier
Helen Peterson
Linda Thorson
Edith & Roy White

Susan Blicq
Patricia Coleman
Brian & Barbara Crow
Janet McLean & Richard South
Frances Miller

Greta Bloomer
Jeanette & James Popplow

Peter Bosko
Roslyn & Ronald Westman

Edward Bowman
Jeanette & James Popplow

Alice Brandt
Henri Pambrun
Lorne Rogers

Devon Brar
Pamela Campbell
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J.L. Marrin

Kyra Brown
Hugh Brown

Albert Bruneau
Renee Billauer
Ruth Tryhuk

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Blair & Valerie Bingeman
Kendall & Deborah Bingeman
Lorraine & Craig Bingeman

Harold Buxman
Eileen M. Solomon

Joseph Bzowy
Olena Homenko

Mac Campbell
Patricia Norton

Jeffrey Charriere
Robert B. Brennan & Doreen Gorda

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Vincenzo Bueti
Lalla & Earl Froebe
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Diane Paulishyn

Frances Crowston
Alan & Mary deGeus

Henry Cullihall
Beverley Cann
Sigrid Fast
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Donna Macaw

Vera Dann
Lorraine Stephen

Brian Danowski
Sheldon & Tannis Mindell

Henri Daudet
Gertrude Hague

Candace Davies
Irene & Richard Kerluck

Ron De Vos
Debbie De Vos

Irene Dehod
Jim Dehod

Nancy Desfosses
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Cycelia Lazarowich
MTS Volunteers

Michael Dineen
Lindsay Dineen

Steve Domitruk
Jeff & Mary Domitruk
John & Frances Domitruk
Jan Kwasnicki
Don Philllips
Carolyn Solomon
Eileen M. Solomon

Robert Donald
Marlyn Donald

Sarah Duboff
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Nora E. Edwards
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Floyd Funk
Lorna Fast

Klara Garson
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Thomas Geekie
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Emily Williamson

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Michael & Katherine Bially
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Donald Graham
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HEALTH VIEWS is published regularly by Riverview Health Centre to provide information about the Centre's programs, initiatives and activities to both the broader community and to its staff and patients.

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"Not only must we be good, but we must also be good for something."
– Henry David Thoreau

"Whatever you do, always give 100 percent, unless you are donating blood."
– Anonymous

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Thanks for your support!

Research at Riverview:
Grant Recipients Reveal Wide Range of Research Interests

Recipients of the 2015 Riverview Health Centre Research Competition received their awards at the Research Meet and Greet held on April 21, 2015 at Riverview Health Centre. Congratulations to Sandra Webb and Tony Szturm, this year's grant recipients. Here, Webber's research is described. Stay tuned for more articles on research at Riverview in upcoming issues of *Health Views,* including Dr. Szturm's. His project is called: *Tele-rehabilitation in the Home with Gaming as a Method of Improving Upper Extremity Function after Stroke.* For more information on the Riverview Research grants and the opportunities available at the Centre, contact John Bond at 204-478-6215 or at jbond@rhc.mb.ca

Investigating Mobility in Patients After Discharge

Walking is one of the most important activities when it comes to staying healthy. If people can keep moving, the healthier and more independent they will be. This is one of the reasons Dr. Sandra Webber studies mobility in older adults.

Webber is an assistant professor in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of Manitoba. She and her co-investigators – Dr. Phil St. John, a geriatric rehabilitation physician, and physiotherapists Brent Winstone and Lesya Fedochynska – are recipients of a 2015 grant from the Riverview Health Centre Research Competition. Their project is called: *Life After Discharge: How mobility measured during and immediately after post geriatric rehabilitation relates to successful outcomes.*

"Hospitalization results in reduced mobility in older adults, leading to further disability and additional health problems," says Webber. Because of this, she maintains there is a great need to find ways to better motivate people to move.

Using activity monitoring technology – high-tech pedometers worn on the ankle – and volunteer geriatric rehabilitation patients at Riverview Health Centre, Webber is studying patterns of activity. This includes monitoring patients for five days while they are in the hospital and then the immediate five days following discharge. There are also follow-up calls made in the months after discharge.

Not surprisingly, Webber is finding that there are differences in what happens in the hospital and what happens at home. "Lots of training done in the hospital doesn't continue after a patient has been discharged, but we suspect this is not true for everyone. For some people, the demands of being home may mean that additional ambulation (movement) is required," she says.

Dr. Sandra Webber

"This information is essential to planning the most effective and efficient interventions to promote long-term independence in those discharged from geriatric rehabilitation," she explains. As everyone has a different story, using a patient-oriented approach can lead to increased efficiency in care.

As for the progress of the study, Webber and her colleagues are half-way through the project and have found working with clients at Riverview to be a rewarding experience. "I love working with older adults. They're keen and interested to see their own results, and they ask lots of questions," she says.

Webber's research has the potential to impact the way space is used in geriatric care facilities. Many of the participants have said they do not walk far in a health care setting simply because there are only so many places they can go. Ultimately, the goal is to make hospital care more efficient and to empower people as they return home.

Help Us Turn Crowdfunding UPSIDE DOWN with this "Promise" Letter

RIVERVIEW HEALTH CENTRE FOUNDATION

We want to turn the concept of crowdfunding upside down. If a **LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE** focus on planned giving for the **LONG TERM BENEFIT** of patients and residents at Riverview Health Centre, we will raise millions of dollars. Please fill out this "promise" letter today to help make this happen.

With my signature, I am committing to leave a legacy gift from my estate to the Riverview Health Centre Foundation. I am now proud to be a member of RHCF's "Circle of Life" Planned Giving Program. By leaving this gift, I am able to build on Riverview's legacy of care and tradition of excellence and assist Riverview in maintaining itself as a leader in providing innovative programs, services, research and education that promotes the health and well-being of Manitobans.

Generosity is a learned trait, and by making this gift, I am hoping that others will follow so that the "Circle of Life" will always grow, resulting in life altering gifts for future generations.

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Two Small Dogs Bring Joy to Riverview

Rigby and Teddy

Teddy and Rigby never had it so good, but then again, neither have the patients and residents at Riverview Health Centre. These two Shih Tzu-Poodle mixes get their ears tickled and their backs scratched while dog-lovers at Riverview enjoy all the great feelings that come from visiting with these friendly animals.

This lively pair are members of Riverview Health Centre Board member Vince Cerasani's family. Five years ago, Vince and his wife, Cathi, would bring Teddy to visit with Cathi's late mother, Marni Miles, who spent time at various health care facilities, including Riverview. The couple discovered that many other people – residents, patients, family members and staff members – would stop to pet the affectionate little dog. "People would smile, straighten their posture and relate a positive memory or story," says Cerasani. "It was gratifying to see the joy that Teddy brought out in people."

The positive experience led Cerasani to bring Teddy, and subsequently Rigby, on a regular basis to visit patients and residents through Riverview's Pet Therapy Program, which is coordinated by the Volunteer Department. The two dogs are now well-known and loved by everyone as they exchange back rubs for smiles.