

Community Foundation reaching \$1M giving milestone

Story
SUBMITTED

By Community Foundation
of Swan Valley

The Community Foundation of Swan Valley (CFSV) is celebrating a milestone in the organization's history in 2021. By the end of this year, CFSV will have gifted just over \$1 million dollars in total giving since 2005. Over the years, CFSV has given back generously to the Valley through their giving program.

The CFSV started with 12 board members, but one particular community member got the ball rolling when it came time to get the organization started.

"Doug Hinchliffe was the one who really got the CFSV going," explained former CFSV Board Member Beggie Palsson. "Doug recruited myself and several other community members to get the organization going. It started out with four of us just meeting for coffee and he brought up this idea of getting a community foundation started. Doug felt it would be a great thing for the Valley; where people could donate money and it would be used for local charitable purposes in perpetuity.

"It took about two years to get the foundation going. Doug and Bill Schneider

raised a lot of money for the CFSV. My part involved the legal aspect and I helped to incorporate the CFSV into a non-profit corporation. Shortly after, we hired an accountant to have the organization classified as a charitable community foundation, so that we could issue tax receipts.

"It has done extremely well over the years," noted Palsson. "It's fantastic to hear the fund has reached over \$1 million in giving."

Over the years the CFSV has given back to many local organizations, sports teams and worthwhile causes in the Valley. Many of these groups contribute the success of their programs due to the help of the foundation and generous contributions made by local people.

"The CFSV has helped the Harley House by supporting our goals of providing an opportunity to experience our history in the valley," said Harley House Secretary Maureen Bowles. "Through the granting opportunities, we've been able to restore the Harley House to its original state. This past year, we've added a stained-glass transom window and now we're working on a Historical Pioneer audio collection, thanks to funding from the foundation and a matching grant from the Build MB150 Committee.

"Having a charity like the CFSV is so important to the Valley. Local people as board members take special pride in our communities and support projects that reflect that pride. Being a local board, they're aware of the needs of the community. We are very fortunate to have such a caring and successful foundation and donors who have made this all possible."

Keeping families in the Valley is a goal many organizations strive to achieve. The CFSV has assisted with this concept, in a variety of ways, from investing into infrastructure, programming and education assistance to students.

"The CFSV has significantly helped the Bowsman Early Learning Centre, which operated as the Wade Philip Galloway Learning Centre, by providing monetary funds for renovation of the Bowsman School classrooms into the daycare," explained Bowsman Early Learning Centre Treasurer Brittany Filuk. "They've also provided monetary funds for a fenced in playground, as well as money towards the playground being built this summer. Their members really stepped up, by being our first major donation towards the centre. This allowed other groups, charities and sponsors to

see the benefit of our centre to the community and follow suit with donations afterwards.

"Without the CFSV, we wouldn't have been able to open our centre and provide childcare. The centre employs four staff and has created jobs in Bowsman. As well, it has created a before and after school care program for the centre. The CFSV has been so cooperative and willing to partner with us. They've provided us support, despite the setbacks and challenges that happened with the pandemic. They supported the concept of us having to get our own playground to keep our children and staff safe, along with money from the emergency grant for extra cleaning and sanitizing at the centre.

"The CFSV is a wonderful backbone to our community in which the people on the board live and work here," added Filuk. "Meanwhile the people who donate to the foundation want to see the community continue to grow and thrive. The CFSV can see where money is needed throughout the community and distribute funds towards those projects."

The CFSV sees the importance of youth in the community and focuses on ensuring that the youth of the Valley are invested in

with the right programming and opportunities to help them succeed. Many sport and recreation opportunities for youth has flourished thanks to the assistance the foundation has provided.

"Within the last three years, the CFSV has provided two separate grants to assist us with our fundraising efforts," explained Swan Valley Minor Hockey Association (SVMHA) Hockey Treasurer Blaine Campbell. "In late 2018, CFSV provided \$2,000 to assist us with our Rink Divider Project. This project enabled SVMHA to adhere to Hockey Manitoba's Novice half ice program to improve engagement, development, and the overall experience of our younger hockey players. More recently, we just found out that the CFSV had approved another \$2,000 grant for our Jersey Replacement project. In a normal season, we would have 12-15 separate teams playing out of the SVMHA, each with a set of jersey requirements. Over time, the jerseys get worn and need to be replaced. Jerseys are replaced periodically but can last anywhere from five to 10 years, depending on use. These funds will assist us in the purchase of a full set of home and away jerseys along with matching socks

for one team. "The donations from the CFSV have had a significant positive impact on SVMHA. A normal fiscal year for SVMHA usually ends with us breaking even financially. Most of the major projects we take on are required and are usually quite costly. Funds to cover these projects come by way of grants, fundraising, or the last resort would be cash from our own reserves. Without the assistance of the CFSV, our cash reserves would suffer further. Excessive draws on our cash reserves would mean we would have to look at increasing our registration fees, which in turn may result in a reduction in our kids playing hockey. So, SVMHA is extremely thankful for the financial assistance we receive from CFSV.

"SVMHA feels our community is very fortunate to have a local charity like the CFSV," concluded Campbell. "We see the CFSV as a trusted philanthropic leader in our community who plays a significant role in enhancing the lives of our Swan Valley residents. Financial assistance from the CFSV goes a long way in assisting our local groups, so we feel it is extremely important to have a local charity like the Community Foundation of Swan Valley."

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