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Yorkton and District Council of Realtors donates over \$36,000 for local healthcare

On December 10th, Yorkton and area REALTORS® came together and presented cheques to both STARS and The Health Foundation totaling \$36,292 both of which provide vital services to the communities throughout the region. “Yorkton and area REALTORS® have been committed to supporting local charities through our previous Council, brokerages and individually, and we wanted to ensure that our final contribution as a Council was shared amongst two worthy organizations that would support all communities within the region, “said Elyce Wilson, Chair of the Yorkton and District Council of REALTORS® (YDCR).

“Healthcare affects everyone and that was an issue that all of our members could see ourselves as an organization supporting. Once we settled on healthcare we wanted to do something that would help people right away, but also into the future. That is why we’ve made this donation in the way we have,” said Ms. Wilson.

“We are donating \$18,146 to STARS, to help with the ongoing work they do. STARS effects dozens of rescues every year in this region, many of those are very urgent and might be vehicular accidents, a person in an isolated area who had a heart attack or stroke, and even emergency pick-ups from the Yorkton Regional Hospital when people need urgent specialist care not available in Yorkton. Many of our REALTORS® and their families have been directly impacted by this service and because of this we strongly understand just how essential this service is. This will be the second large donation that we have made to STARS. In September of 2017 the Council proudly presented STARS with over \$18,000 worth of proceeds raised at our annual charity golf tournament” adds Wilson.

Tammy Beauregard, representative with the STARS organization points out that “this generous gift will help many lives and will impact countless others, not only in the Yorkton area, but across Saskatchewan. It will also fuel innovation, enabling us to continue to provide world class emergency air medical care and transport to those in need”.

Further to the STARS need, the Council opted to put their remaining funds directly at home with a donation to the helipad for the New Regional Hospital when it is built, totaling an additional \$18,146. Currently, patients that are admitted to the hospital are financially responsible for the cost of transport from their hospital bed to the City permitted landing zone for STARS. The Council felt that it was imperative that patients have access to a Helipad, not only for their financial security but for their own physical well-being.

‘We have been advised that we will be the next regional hospital that will move forward,’ said Ross Fisher, Executive Director of The Health Foundation. “Preliminary discussions have talked about a heli-pad as part of a new hospital, and really for major facilities heli-pads are becoming essential. However, the community is responsible for raising 20% of base construction costs of a new facility and is responsible for 100% of new equipment costs, so donations like this one will be crucial to our having all of the services we want in a new hospital,” he continued.

A heli-pad will be an important part of a new hospital. Time is usually important if STARS are picking a patient up from the hospital. Currently, hospital transfers using STARS are not done on hospital grounds, as we have no heli-pad. Patients are transported to a suitable location and then transferred to the STARS helicopter. That delay needs to be eliminated. Fifteen minutes can sometimes save a persons’ life.

“When we begin to plan for the next hospital and then begin to raise money for it, this kind of forward planning will become an important conversation in our community. We want to express our appreciation for the generosity of the Yorkton and District Council of Realtors and for the thoughtfulness they have demonstrated by looking to the future in this way,” continued Mr. Fisher.

Len Wassill, CREA Saskatchewan Regional Director adds - The YDCR has been an essential organization formed for the sole purpose of joining like minds and protecting the general public and their rights. Originating as the Yorkton Real Estate Association approximately 40 years ago and changing to the YDCR approximately 12 years ago, the Council will now be folding to make way for a single provincial organization – The Saskatchewan REALTORS® Association. The Council has supported numerous charities over the years including Habitat for Humanity, Yorkton School Breakfast Club, STARS, Rail Side Industries, The Food Bank and so many more. It’ll be interesting to see what the future of real estate will look like with this amalgamation moving to a single Association come January 1, 2020.