



Giving Back

with the Battle River Community Foundation

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Join us for our annual open house

The Battle River Community Foundation will be holding its annual open house on Wednesday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m. at the Norsemen Inn.

Please join us as we take a look back at a very successful year and hear from some of the organizations whose projects have been supported by grants.

We will also hear from Norm Mayer, owner

of Central Agencies and former Mayor of the City of Camrose, who will share his thoughts on why he and his family have chosen to become donors to the Battle River Community Foundation.

Stay for refreshments and enjoy the opportunity to visit informally with Foundation Board members.

Grant made for defibrillator



The Battle River Community Foundation granted \$1500 for the purchase of an external defibrillator. In the photo are David Chamberlain and Arlene Hay presenting a cheque to Jennifer Barnhardt, Janet McGeer, Rob Hastie and Len Stelmaschuk. Details are on Page 4.

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Combining two things that are very dear



Tom Kuntz accepts the first installment for the Aspenes Family Fund for Brain Injury Prevention.

Wilf and Lois Aspenes live a comfortable life. They've sold the farm and retired into town; they're pretty healthy; and as active as they want to be.

They are both from the Camrose area and have lived locally all their lives. They believe in giving back to the community that has been their home and are strongly supportive of the work of the Battle River Community Foundation.

But there's something else that's important to Wilf and Lois, too. They want to make a difference in hopes of preventing even one other family from having to endure the nightmare they experienced when their daughter suffered a brain injury.

It was March 30, 1991, when Brenda's life changed forever and her parents' lives changed, too.

Brenda was 29 at the time, a vibrant young woman with a successful career as a nurse in the Emergency Room of Vancouver General Hospital, who had also worked in high risk obstetrics and as a medi-vac nurse. She was out for a day trip with her boyfriend and they were driving home down the Hope - Princeton Highway when a boulder fell on their car, knocking it end over end 50 feet down a mountain embankment.

The kindness of strangers, the talents of emergency rescue crews and the grace of God kept Brenda alive that night. According to her parents, Brenda's physical strength, personal determination and common sense philosophy have kept her going ever since.

Wilf still recalls the minute details of those difficult days. Lois gets teary at the memory of seeing her beautiful daughter lying comatose and unrecognizable in a hospital bed. Brenda was in a deep coma for three months and her survival is considered a miracle. After some initial recovery Brenda was transferred to Edmonton's University Hospital then on to the Glenrose Rehabilitation Centre. The hospital stays lasted nearly a year and marked only the beginning of a new way of life.

Brenda's eyes were damaged and her teeth needed reconstruction. She has no use of her right arm and her left side is stiff. The brain injury means she loses her balance easily. She has forgotten a whole year of her life and continues to have short term memory issues. Her voice is impaired, as is her ability to read and spell. The former nurse still has a care attendant who assists her twice a week.

Today, though, Brenda's parents marvel at their daughter's achievements and are proud of her life.

In spite of her limitations, Brenda is doing well. She married Tim Belec (the boyfriend driving the car) in 1995 and is the mother of a seven-year-old daughter. The family lives on an acreage at Pigeon Lake and are active participants in their community. Brenda regularly does household tasks such as laundry, although she doesn't cook. She enjoys crafts and has recently started making cards with very detailed, delicate dried flower arrangements.

Brenda's story has a happy ending, but it's not a tale Wilf and Lois want any other family to have to tell.

"We know Brenda couldn't have prevented her injury," Wilf concedes, "but lots of brain injuries can be avoided. We want to support preventive programs and raise awareness of even simple

things like wearing helmets for biking and skateboarding."

One of the initiatives Wilf and Lois are especially interested in is the PARTY program, which encourages teenagers to think about the potential consequences of high risk behaviour.

"Any young person in an accident risks a brain injury," explains Wilf. "They've had no chance to start a life. Anything we can do to help people be aware and be careful we want to do. There's no other injury like it, you're left with someone who's not the same person."

As a result of Brenda's experience, Wilf and Lois have started a fund through the Battle River Community Foundation for brain injury prevention and awareness. They would be honoured to have other interested people add to their \$10,000 pledge.



Wilf and Lois Aspenes' daughter, Brenda Belec, suffered profound injuries in an accident. Today, she is able to create delicate dried flower arrangement greeting cards.

"Because of our belief in the Foundation's work and our interest in brain injury prevention," Wilf says, "we've taken the privilege of combining two things that are very dear to us."

Why I support the Foundation

Dana Andreassen can't predict the future, but she wants to be part of making it positive.

"Even the most visionary people can't predict accurately what's going to happen down the road," Dana explains. "Sometimes it's hard to see even three to five years ahead, let alone 100 years."

Dana believes that, by supporting the work of the Battle River Community Foundation, she can be part of ensuring that the future is a healthy one for our area. She likes the fact that the Foundation is flexible enough to be responsive to changing needs.

"The Battle River Community Foundation gives people the opportunity to provide for challenges and opportunities they can't even imagine."

Dana believes in the philosophy of "taking when you need and giving when you can" as a means of working together to keep communities healthy.

With its emphasis on creating funds that will exist in perpetuity, with the interest being made available to support projects that fulfill local needs, Dana sees the Foundation as being the right vehicle for making a sustained difference.

Dana and her siblings have created a fund in their family name. Dana is also in her second year of serving on the Foundation Board. "I'm honoured to be part of it. It's a Board with an important role to play."

Dana is a lawyer who grew up in Camrose and has returned to her hometown to assist with the transition of Augustana University College into the University of Alberta.



Dana Andreassen



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Response Card

Please send me

- the last annual report of the Foundation
- more information about making a planned gift
- more information related to

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Grant supports heart safety

No one wants to have a heart attack.

But for people who do have them, quick assistance can make the difference between life and death; between minor damage and major disability.

The Camrose area has a new Heart Safe committee working toward having defibrillation equipment available in public places, to make assistance available more quickly to heart attack victims.

The goal of the committee is to have equipment on hand in a variety of locations, such as arenas, stores, and other places where lots of people go. It has been documented that cardiac arrest patients are twice as likely to survive in places where defibrillators are readily available and volunteers have been trained to use them.

Thanks to a \$1500 grant from the Battle River Community Foundation and other community support, there will be portable defibrillation equipment available through the Public Health unit, to be used by Health Nurses at community immunization clinics and other public occasions, in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest.

This is only the start of what the Heart Safe committee hopes will lead to having a number of defibrillators available in strategic locations.

The grant to purchase the defibrillator is being funded, in part, through the Gordon and Arlene Hay Fund.

Mark your calendar for October 28

The Battle River Community Foundation will be hosting its second Community Builders' evening on Friday, October 28, 2005.

The Community Builders' evening is an event to honour those who have helped their community become a better and stronger place to live, by being active and contributing in a variety of ways.

The evening includes dinner and various speakers. There is also the opportunity to make donations to the Battle River Community Foundation in the name of the people being honoured this year.

At the first Community Builders' evening, in 2004, local volunteers Joe and Phyllis Voytechek were celebrated for their unflagging enthusiasm to coaching hockey and swimming, as well as helping with Meals on Wheels and other important community causes.

This year's honoured couple will be announced shortly. Watch for details.