



# Your HealthMatters

ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL FOUNDATION • rchcares.com • FALL 2014



Thaddeus and Quinttin, at home after six months in Royal Columbian Hospital's Variety neonatal intensive care unit.

## Smaller than a pound of butter...

### AT HOME WITH SURREY'S MIRACLE MICRO-PREEMIES, A YEAR AFTER THEIR BIRTH AT ROYAL COLUMBIAN

This year has been hectic for Surrey's Christine Ashton, but she would not want it any other way.

The Surrey mother of twins Thaddeus and Quinttin has embraced family life since arriving home with her boys this past spring. It was just before Easter that she left Royal Columbian Hospital's Variety neonatal intensive care unit for the first time with her babies, who had received care for six months as some of the tiniest premature babies ever seen by the neonatal team.

"Since then, it's been so busy with medical appointments," says Ashton. "But the cuties are doing well and are getting bigger and wider."

Ashton was only 23 weeks pregnant when she was rushed to Royal Columbian Hospital with contractions last October. Thaddeus was born first, weighing only 405 grams, or as Ashton puts it, "less than a pound of butter." Quinttin was born two minutes later, at 570 grams.

As one of four hospitals across the province prepared to handle the most fragile newborns, Royal Columbian Hospital cares for hundreds of tiny ones each year. But twins as premature as Thaddeus and Quinttin are rare.

"I was in shock," says Ashton. "Especially not knowing if they were going to survive, and knowing their chance of survival wasn't very high. I just wanted to give them a chance."

"Here we had a situation where we had micro-preemies at less than 24 weeks, and on top of it, twins,"

notes neonatologist Dr. Zenon Cieslak. "The outcomes are not generally good."

In the neonatal intensive care unit, Thaddeus and Quinttin were supported by specialized equipment like Giraffe Omnibed incubators and a jet ventilator, which

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Thaddeus shown next to a pencil, illustrating his small size at birth.

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# A letter from the chair

**DOUG EVENESHEN**



Christine Ashton's compelling story on the front page serves as an incredible reminder of the awe-inspiring skills of our health care professionals, along with the gracious generosity of our donors whose gifts result in life-saving equipment to

Royal Columbian Hospital. The combination makes for quite an impressive team.

It is my pleasure, as newly appointed Chair of Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation, to present the fall

2014 edition of Your Health Matters. The stories in here are meant to offer a glimpse into the important role Royal Columbian plays in the province. I am grateful to the people who have agreed to share their experiences with us.

I am also very proud to introduce the Foundation's new President and CEO, Jeff Norris. Jeff is highly regarded and has spent many years making a difference in a number of charitable endeavours. His arrival to Royal Columbian comes at a time when the hospital prepares to undergo one of the largest redevelopments in Canada.

I cannot thank you enough for the ongoing support. With your help, we continue to be there for those who rely on Royal Columbian in their time of need, like Christine and her precious boys.

Yours sincerely,

**Doug Eveneshen,**  
Chair, Board of Directors

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## Smaller than a pound of butter...

donors like Variety – the Children's Charity of BC and the TB Vets Charitable Foundation have helped to fund.

Despite a number of challenges, Ashton noticed gradual improvements in her boys' conditions. And after 188 days, she was finally able to bring them home.

Ashton can't believe the twins will soon be celebrating their first birthdays. She says they enjoy going out for walks with her around the neighbourhood and are fascinated by other children playing. And despite the constant attention infants like Thaddeus and Quintin require, Ashton loves every minute of it. ■

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# New Foundation President & CEO

**INTRODUCING JEFF NORRIS**



Staff photo.

Jeff has made a positive impression on a number of organizations since then. This includes seven years with St. Paul's Hospital Foundation, where he helped grow its Lights of Hope campaign.

He comes to Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation from Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU), where he worked since 2006 as Chief Advancement Officer and also served as CEO of the KPU Foundation and executive director of the KPU Alumni Association, a group he was involved in founding.

In 2012, Jeff was awarded a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Ladner for his community work. In 2014, he was recognized by Business in Vancouver with a "Forty Under 40" Award for his business accomplishment.

Married with two daughters, Jeff is also active in his community and regularly contributes as a volunteer and board member of various associations. ■

He's worn many hats over the years, but it was during a time when Jeff Norris was wearing a bicycle helmet that he discovered a passion for philanthropy.

While at university, he was hired to co-ordinate a cycling fundraising event. The experience opened his eyes to the world of non-profits.

# The meaning of moments

**COQUITLAM WOMAN IS THANKFUL FOR THE CARE GIVEN TO HER FATHER**

A health crisis is difficult for any family. In these moments, a grieving daughter has discovered the small gestures can be as significant as the expert care.

For Coquitlam's Juliana Kim, it started when her father Mike had a stroke in early 2012. He was rushed to Royal Columbian

Hospital, where he

spent a week before he was able to return home.

The family would find itself back in the hospital a year later, when Mr. Kim was again admitted, this time for persistent coughing. It would be diagnosed as stage 4 lung cancer.

Over the next several months, Mr. Kim would be admitted to RCH two more times. He passed away in late September, 2013.

After struggling with the uncertainty over her father's health last year, Juliana now recognizes and appreciates the care at Royal Columbian.

She remembers a doctor's words of encouragement during an especially challenging time trying to juggle school and helping care for her father. Juliana says the physician's advice helped her focus heading into graduation.

She also credits a conversation with a nurse for giving her father the strength to carry on during treatment. These are among the personal exchanges that make Juliana grateful for the efforts of the health care professionals who looked after her dad. ■



Juliana Kim thanks the hospital for its support. Foundation photo.



Roy Fawcett and his wife Phyllis in the backyard of their Chilliwack home more than a year after his heart valve replacement. Foundation photo.

# The way to a beating heart

**ROYAL COLUMBIAN HOSPITAL PERFORMS MILESTONE 100TH EVER MINIMALLY-INVASIVE HEART VALVE REPLACEMENT**

For Roy Fawcett of Chilliwack, a summer camping adventure with the grandchildren was just as much about creating memories as it was about enjoying the outdoors. And he's thankful he had the energy to do it.

It was a different story just a couple of years ago. Back then, Fawcett could hardly move from one room to the other in his house without having to take a break. Fawcett suffered from aortic stenosis, a common condition that occurs when the heart's aortic valve leaflets get calcified and become immobile. It was leaving him very short of breath.

Fawcett says Royal Columbian gave him his life back. That's because the hospital is one of three in the province able to perform a minimally-invasive procedure called a transcatheter aortic valve implantation

– or TAVI for short. Royal Columbian is also the designated centre for open-heart surgery and minimally invasive cardiac procedures in Fraser Health.

This past summer, Royal Columbian conducted its 100th ever TAVI, which is the option for patients whose health or medical history make them at high-risk or unsuitable for open heart surgery. Without TAVI, those patients could suffer heart failure and sudden death.

TAVI replaces the aortic valve in a beating heart by carefully threading a catheter (a thin flexible tube) that contains the new valve, usually from the groin artery to the heart.

Fawcett says the change in his health was almost instantaneous. Since undergoing TAVI last year, Fawcett is able to garden with his wife again. And he has the energy to spend quality time with his grandchildren again.

"The team at Royal Columbian Hospital has given me back a quality of life that I thought was lost forever," says Fawcett. "My family and I are thankful beyond words". ■

# Report to donors: your gift is critical to the care we provide

## Four life-saving letters

→ By the time Tsawwassen resident Peter Rogal walked into an emergency department last fall, a rare bacteria had filled his lungs and brought him to the brink of death. Health professionals induced a coma and told his family the 50-year old had one last option: Royal Columbian Hospital's extracorporeal life support (ECLS).

The equipment takes over the function of the lungs or heart while a patient's organs recover. A team from Royal Columbian transported Rogal to the hospital's intensive care unit with a mobile version of ECLS, which donors had funded just weeks earlier and is the only one of its kind in BC. In particular, two families - Ray & Ruth Wesenberg of



Peter Rogal is connected to the portable version of ECLS as he is brought to Royal Columbian. Submitted photo.

West Vancouver and Ralph & Florence Winkler of Langley - contributed more than \$120,000 combined to support the program.

Rogal was kept on ECLS for close to a week and awoke from his coma ten days after being induced. Having now recovered from a form of Legionnaires' disease, Rogal is thankful ECLS was available for him. "I am the luckiest guy in the world," he says. ■



Peter Rogal, back home after being released from Royal Columbian.

## Monitoring a baby's brain

→ Sometimes, seizures in premature newborns are so subtle, they can only be confirmed through use of a neonatal brain monitor.

That's one reason this equipment is important for the care of our smallest and most fragile patients. Because premature babies are not yet fully developed, they face a number of possible complications and require specialized care from skilled medical professionals in the neonatal intensive care unit. The risks include damage to the brain from lack of oxygen or bleeding.

In both cases, early diagnosis is critical to minimize long-term effects. Special thanks to the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation of Canada and the Elks Club of New Westminster, whose gifts



Premature babies face a number of possible complications and require specialized care.

have helped our Variety neonatal intensive care unit diagnose and monitor these very serious, life-threatening conditions and ensure our tiny patients get treatment as quickly as possible. ■

## Financial Summary

In 2013/14, the Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation granted a total of \$ 1,400,838 to RCH. These funds went to priority equipment needs, facility enhancements, and education. Our fundraising and marketing costs were 18 per cent of total revenues, and our administration costs were 17 per cent. ■

Revenue	
Donations	\$ 3,441,729
Investments	990,903
Other Income	840,337
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,272,969</b>

Grants and Expenses	
Grants to Royal Columbian Hospital	\$ 1,400,838
Fundraising and Marketing	972,214
Administration	901,593
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,274,645</b>



## Teaching tool

→ Royal Columbian plays an important role in training the next generation of health care professionals. Microscopes with teaching arms allow multiple people to view a pathology case simultaneously. This allows pathologists to consult each other as well as discuss cases with residents, clinicians, and allied health professionals in order to arrive at the correct diagnosis for each patient. A number of donations have helped the Foundation purchase a new one. ■



## Electrical activity

← Chest pain. Nausea. Dizziness. Thousands of patients come to Royal Columbian Hospital each year with these symptoms, fearing the worst. Each receives an electrocardiogram (ECG) test to measure the electrical activity of the heart. This fast, safe, non-invasive test provides a wealth of information in a variety of circumstances—it can determine the rate and regularity of heart beats, the size and position of heart chambers, and confirm or rule out a heart attack. And all in about five minutes.

As ECG machines are one of the most frequently used pieces of equipment at the hospital, new ones are much appreciated. Donations from RBC Foundation and a number of other gifts helped us purchase two this past year. ■



## Combatting cancer

← Colon cancer is the second leading cause of death from cancer in Canada. Our donors have helped the hospital combat the disease by funding a colonoscope for Ambulatory Care.

With a high definition colonoscope, our physicians can detect polyps in the colon before they become cancerous and remove them right then and there, thereby eliminating the risk of colon cancer.

Kingston Construction made a donation towards this equipment to honour the memory of its founder Ben Backman, who passed away in 2009 after a long battle with colon cancer.

Royal Columbian Hospital is the major referral centre for the diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal (GI) disorders in the Fraser Health region. Our physicians perform over 3,300 colonoscopies each year. ■

# An original Canuck on love and healing at Royal Columbian

## VANCOUVER CANUCK ALUMNI MAKE ROYAL COLUMBIAN A CHARITABLE RECIPIENT OF ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

Back in 1970, Eddie Hatoum had to cancel a date with his girlfriend when he separated his shoulder and underwent surgery at Royal Columbian Hospital. That's okay though. They're married now.

At the time, Hatoum was preparing for the Vancouver Canucks' inaugural 1970/71 season, after the team claimed him in the NHL Expansion Draft.

Unfortunately, the smooth-skating forward suffered a bad injury during training camp. He fell while trying to get by the two defencemen and knew right away he was in trouble.

"I was about to hit the ice with my head," recalls Hatoum. "So I turned and landed probably about 190 pounds on my shoulder, and that's when it separated."

One of the team's trainers put him in a van, and off they drove to Royal Columbian Hospital. After a bumpy and painful ride from the arena to the hospital,



Former Vancouver Canuck Eddie Hatoum and fellow alumnus & Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation board member John Ashbridge.

a doctor quickly realized Hatoum would need to go to the operating room.

Hatoum was out of action for several weeks before finally rejoining his teammates and playing in 26 games for the Canucks that first season. Today, Hatoum is a member of the Canuck Alumni and plays a number of benefit hockey games and golf tournaments across the province.

Hatoum reflected on his experience at Royal Columbian Hospital during this past spring's annual Canuck Alumni Golf Classic. Royal Columbian Hospital

Foundation is a charitable recipient of the event, which saw members of the 1970 team reunite for the day with other former players.

Along with being grateful for the care he received at Royal Columbian, Hatoum fondly remembers the daily hospital visits from then-girlfriend Frances, with whom he had apologetically cancelled a planned date.

"She came out to Royal Columbian every day from Vancouver, and the rest is history," says Hatoum, who married her after the two reconnected decades later. ■

# A mother's grief



Marilyn Dowsett credits Royal Columbian Hospital for helping her after her son's death.

## SEEKING MENTAL HEALTH CARE AT ROYAL COLUMBIAN

Gregory Dowsett wasn't supposed to live as long as he did. Right from the start, he faced some complicated health problems, including being born with only three heart chambers instead of four. Greg underwent a few surgeries and suffered a stroke shortly after turning one year old.

But mom Marilyn says her son lived life to the fullest and travelled extensively to places like South Africa, Australia, and England, where he enjoyed spending time with relatives.

In late September, 2003, Greg was rushed to hospital after falling ill. He was kept in an induced coma until he passed away several days later, at the age of 25. His death devastated Marilyn.

"He was the first thing, the last thing, most of the things I ever thought of," says the Port Coquitlam woman about her son. "I never thought about doing anything without first thinking of Greg."

The grief was overwhelming, and Marilyn describes

having regular panic attacks. "We went to a barbecue once, and I actually stood in the middle of this backyard and screamed at the top of my voice," she recalls.

Marilyn was referred to Royal Columbian Hospital psychiatrist Dr. Anson Koo, who eventually admitted her. "I was terrified," says Marilyn. "But my husband took me and knew it was the best thing, because I wasn't doing very well. I wasn't coping at all."

Marilyn spent five weeks at Royal Columbian Hospital, followed by 13-weeks in an outpatient program. "I met the most caring, the most compassionate people you could ever meet in your entire life," recalls Marilyn. "I was also amazed at who else was in the hospital with me. How many young people, how many ordinary people, people that didn't seem different. They were just struggling with life."

Over time, Marilyn learned coping techniques that she says have helped her enormously. She continues to see Dr. Koo during follow-up visits.

"My life has changed completely since Gregory died," she says. "I am 100% a different person. I just feel so fortunate that I was where I was at the right time in order to be able to get this long-term support." ■



Royal Columbian Hospital FOUNDATION

**Yes, I believe my care is critical.**

Here is my gift of:

- \$200  \$100  \$50
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Enclosed is my cheque made payable to:

**Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation**

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