

OUR COMMUNITY

Wounded Warrior Run starts today



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Make sure you wave or honk your horn if you see members of the 2020 Wounded Warrior Run B.C. team as they run from Port Hardy to Victoria in a relay-style run, starting today.

Over eight days the team of eight runners and their support staff will make a variety of visits to local Legions, community halls, fire, ambulance and police departments.

The goal of the run is to raise funds and awareness for Wounded Warriors Canada programs on Vancouver Island.

Programs help veterans, first responders and their families struggling with operation stress injuries, such as PTSD.

The run starts today from the Port Hardy Civic Centre at 6:25 a.m. and, after a visit to the Port MacNeill Legion branch 281, will arrive in Woss at 5:50 p.m.

The runners will run from Mil Bay to Victoria on Sunday, March 1, ending at the legislature buildings at 4:30 p.m.

For more information, go to woundedwarriorrunbc.ca. If you want to track the runners in real time, go to inhistogether.run.

Girl, 11, comes up big for Make-a-Wish

Avery Flach convinced her father to raffle off a 15-storey building so that she could grant wishes to kids battling critical illnesses.

The 11-year-old started with a goal to raise \$100 for Make-A-Wish so that a child could get their wish granted.

"I love how happy the kids are to have their wish granted," said Flach. "The smiles on their faces are amazing."

She decided she would start fundraising in July 2019 with an end date of Valentine's Day, 2020. She hosted a bake sale and bottle drive, and her friends and family kicked in with some donations.

She not only met her target, but exceeded it more than 15 times over with a grand total of \$1,520.

This story could have ended in triumph right there, but her father, Wade Flach, has decided he could build on his daughter's example.

The elder Flach will take part in Rope For Hope, a Make-A-Wish fundraiser that raffles participants to raffle from the roof of the CIBC building in downtown Victoria.

The event takes place June 26. "I was so amazed by what Avery accomplished, I was wanting to carry on her hard work," said Flach, 49. "I would like to show her how much of a difference one person can make."

The minimum fundraiser, which is required to raffle in Rope for Hope is \$1,500. Last year's event raised more than \$73,000 for the granting of wishes to kids on Vancouver Island.

Simone Conner, Make-A-Wish B.C. and Yukon's director of Vancouver Island operations, is impressed by the initiative and example of the Flach family.

"At Make-A-Wish, we have a program called Kids For Wish Kids, which simply encourages kids of all ages to be creative, and find ways raise funds for the granting of wishes," she said.

"The fact that Avery's fundraising success also encouraged her dad to join us at our Rope For Hope event and continue the fundraising is icing on the cake. Their support is going to help us continue to grant more wishes here on the island and that's amazing."

Anyone wishing to help the Flach family achieve their fundraising goal can do so by visiting their personal fundraising page at makeawish.ca/donor-drive.com/participant/wadeflach.

For more information, go to victoria.ropeforhope.ca.

Developer donates \$600K to hospital foundation

A real estate development company in Victoria has just made a \$600,000 donation to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation's Big Picture campaign.

The donation by Townline, a real estate development company, helps complete the foundation's goal of acquiring a new 3 Tesla



The Wounded Warriors team enters the grounds of the legislature in 2018. This year's event starts in Port Hardy today and arrives in Victoria on March 1. JOHN PENNER, JOHN'S PHOTOGRAPHY



Avery Flach, 11, started with a goal to raise \$100 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. She ended up with a grand total of \$1,520. WADE FLACH

MRI machine for the Royal Jubilee Hospital.

For Townline president Rick Ilich, the contribution is ingrained in the builder's down-to-earth philosophy of enriching cities and communities in every way.

"Doing our part means taking care of the health, spirit and well-being of our communities by supporting a variety of social programs, cultural events and local hospitals," said Ilich.

The developer is no stranger to philanthropic gestures, carrying on a tradition of involvement with local hospital foundations begun by his late father, Milan Ilich, more than 30 years ago.

"Because of Townline's remarkable gift, our community has successfully met our goal in funding the 3T MRI through the Big Picture campaign," said Avery Brohman, acting executive director for the Victoria Hospitals Foundation. "This equipment supports not only our patients in Victoria, but those throughout Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands who are referred here for advanced care. Townline's gift has helped give our physicians and care teams the ability to see what's happening inside a patient's body, in real time. We cannot thank them enough for this incredibly philanthropic gesture and for inspiring our team and community."

The Big Picture is the foundation's largest and most ambitious campaign to date, aiming to raise \$4 million for priority medical imaging equipment for Royal Jubilee and Victoria General hospitals.

For more information, go to viahf.ca/bigpicture.

Pink Shirt Gala Saturday at Ogden Point

Support bully prevention while enjoying an evening of pink at the Pink Shirt Gala on Saturday at Ogden Point.

The Pink Shirt Gala will be an evening of everything in pink — cocktails, food, décor, dress, entertainment and surprises.

Proceeds from the party will help fund to expand Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out and Seek help (WITS) programs into more Canadian schools.

The national bullying-prevention program was formerly the Rock Solid Foundation, started 22 years ago in Victoria.

Come dressed to impress in your best pink party attire. Expect non-stop entertainment, a gourmet meal from Toque Catering and prizes, including a grand prize of two tickets anywhere WestJet flies.

The WITS Programs Foundation is a registered Canadian charity working to reduce peer-victimization and bullying, and teach conflict resolution from kindergarten.

Tickets are \$150 to \$200. The party runs 6 to 11 p.m. Saturday at the Breakwater District at Ogden Point Terminal, Pier B, 185 Dallas Rd.

For more information, go to pinkshirtgala.com.

Whisky Festival raises \$30,000 for charities

The 2020 Victoria Whisky Festival has raised more than \$30,000 for local charities.

It was the 15th year of the festival, which was held in January. It features whiskies from Vancouver Island around the world, with 56 events over four days.

Proceeds from the event were mostly aimed at youth, with the two primary beneficiaries being the TLC Fund for Kids and Victoria Crime Stoppers.

Over the past 15 years, the festival has supported more than a dozen other charities in the region, giving \$400,000 back to initiatives in the community. "In addition to the money directly raised by the festival to contribute to charitable initiatives, we have also donated festival packages to a variety of charitable auctions and raffles which extends the fundraising aspect event further," said Frank Hudson, festival director and co-organizer. "Because of those additional

gives back to the community, we don't put an exact number on the fundraising, but we do know it's more than \$400,000."

The 16th Victoria Whisky Festival will be held Jan. 14 to 17, 2021, at the Hotel Grand Pacific. Tickets go on sale in early November.

For more information, go to victoriawhiskyfestival.com.

Marathon pledge program deadline approaching

The application deadline to be included in the Charity Pledge Program of the 2020 GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon is fast approaching.

If you are a charity, being part of the program means you can raise awareness and funds by encouraging individuals to run or walk for you by collecting pledges.

Large and small charities are encouraged to apply to become a charity partner. "In some cases, charities have a goal of raising \$2,500, while others aim for \$100,000," said Cathy Noel, general manager of the Victoria Marathon Society.

"Through the partnership with the marathon the charities don't have to worry about equipment, permits, registrations, and all the other things that go into putting on an event. The role of the charities is to do what they do best and increase awareness and be the ambassadors of their cause. I am looking forward to meeting and helping our 2020 charities."

The Charity Pledge Program has raised \$2 million since its inception in 2013. The application deadline for charities to apply to be a part of the 2020 CHEK Charity Pledge Program is March 15.

For more information, go to raceroster.com/events/2020/27756/chek-charity-pledge-program-2020.

TD Bank to sponsor PISE sports festival

The Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence has just revealed the TD Bank Group as the title

sponsor for their annual Family Sport and Recreation Festival.

The festival, co-hosted with the Greater Victoria Sports Hall of Fame, is a free, half-day interactive sport and recreation exposition for the family, which takes place in May.

"We are so pleased to welcome TD as Title Sponsor of our beloved Family Sport and Recreation Festival," said Robert Bettauer, CEO of PISE.

"The community looks forward to this event each May where we welcome over 2000 people to experience the joy of being active and trying new sports and activities."

"With the support of TD Bank Group, we will be able to continue to offer an outstanding, inclusive festival experience with a broad variety of fun experiences for the whole family."

The sponsorship was made possible through TD Ready Commitment, the bank's corporate citizen framework. It targets community-giving in four areas — health, financial security, a more vibrant planet and connected communities.

The festival includes more than 30 activities for children of all ages to try. It has proven to be a great way to introduce children and parents to sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities in Greater Victoria.

The TD Family Sport and Recreation Festival takes place at the PISE campus on May 2.

For more information, go to pise.ca.

Fashion Splash supports women's shelter

See the latest fashions and help support the Victoria Women's Transition House at the same time at Fashion Splash, Saturday at Ogden Point Terminal Pier A.

The event is an opportunity for designers to showcase their locally designed and crafted clothes made from natural fibres, reclaimed materials and recycled fibres.

This fashion event, which includes a runway show, brings together Victoria's fashion community with more than 36 models, 12 local designers and a team of over 20 hair and makeup experts led by Erin Badley.

Joseph Gonyeau, the event manager, put on Victoria's first fashion week in 2017. "Fashion Splash is an original fashion event," said Gonyeau. "Unlike fashion weeks around the world, Victoria deserves its unique show that represents the beautiful environment that we live. All of these designers are environmentally friendly."

Apart from the fashions, there will be live music, drinks and a silent auction.

The event is a fundraiser for the Victoria Women's Transition House.

Tickets are \$50 to \$110. The VIP access begins at 6 p.m., the official opening starts at 6 and the show runs from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 29 at Ogden Point Terminal Pier A, 211 Dallas Rd.

For more information, go to nomadmarketevents.com.