

September 3, 2019

Public Service Announcement

Kidney March ... an unforgettable journey

Kidney March is September 6 – 8, 2019 • 3 days – 100 kilometres – K-Country to Calgary

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is celebrating a huge milestone: the **10th anniversary of Kidney March takes place September 6 - 8, 2019**. 630 + Marchers and Crew will make the unforgettable **3-day, 100 KM walk from Kananaskis Country to Calgary**.

This breathtaking adventure begins at the Millarville Race Track, passes through K-Country and Bragg Creek, and ends at Canada Olympic Park in Calgary. Marchers are drawn together because their lives have been impacted by kidney disease. Patients, loved ones, doctors, nurses and scientists all participate together side by side, connecting the community and building bonds that go far beyond the event itself. **Kidney March is the only event of its kind on Earth** and participants are traveling here to march for this cause from across Canada and internationally.

1 in 10 Canadians has kidney disease, and each day 15 people learn their kidneys have failed. The money raised at Kidney March supports prevention, lifesaving research, patient programs, kidney kids camp, and organ donation initiatives. There is no cure for Kidney Disease, both Dialysis and Transplants are a form of life support, this is why supporting research is vital to the development of improved treatments and a cure. 77% of Canadians waiting for an organ transplant are waiting for a Kidney. With an average wait time of over 4 years. Due to the long wait, many become too sick to receive a transplant or die waiting.

“We have a record number of people doing Kidney March this year, and our goal was to raise over one Million dollars, our most ambitious yet, and today we have surpassed it,” says Joyce Van Deurzen, Executive Director, The Kidney Foundation of Canada (Southern Alberta). “We are thrilled that so many people have joined our Kidney March family. The support from across Canada is truly phenomenal.”

- **Reporters are invited to attend the Kidney March Opening Ceremony on Friday, September 6 at 7:00 am.** At Millarville Racetrack, 306097 192 Street, Millarville, AB T0L 1K0
- **Reporters are also invited to the Kidney March Closing Ceremony Saturday September 8th 2:30 – 4:30 pm.** At Canada Olympic Park’s Markin MacPhail Centre 151 Canada Olympic Rd SW, Calgary AB. There will be a parade made up of all 600+ participants down the COP hill into the Centre lead by a RCMP and CPS officer and 6 rodeo flag horses.

****Some available interviewees and story briefs below.***

Joyce Van Deurzen (403-255-6108 ext26 joyce.vandeurzen@kidney.ca) Executive Director of The Kidney Foundation of Canada Southern Alberta Branch is available for interviews regarding the event.

Greg Robbins Contact Michelle Hofer to arrange interview. Greg Robbins is the National President of the Board for The Kidney Foundation of Canada and a Kidney Donor. He is coming all the way from Sarnia ON to march with us this year. Greg's connection with kidney disease and his involvement with The Kidney Foundation of Canada began at the same time, when in 1973 his new bride chronic kidney disease progressed to the point where she needed to begin hemodialysis. Thus began his late wife Susan's 32-year journey with home hemodialysis, two failed transplant attempts, and finally a successful kidney transplant from Greg. "Since the start of my personal adventure with chronic kidney disease in 1973, I have witnessed tremendous changes and progress in the technology and treatment of kidney disease. My commitment to the Foundation stems from the desire to further the research and progress towards the ultimate cure and prevention of this insidious disease." - Greg Robbins

Dr Dan Muruve, Calgary AB Contact Michelle Hofer to arrange interview. Dan Muruve, (Professor, Department of Medicine, kidney specialist, and Canada Research Chair in Personalized Medicine, Inflammation and Kidney Disease). He has been funded directly by The Kidney Foundation for research in the past and he is also a multi-year participant of Kidney March. Dan is a big supporter of the event and it's benefits to the community. He is dedicated to raising awareness not only about Kidney Disease but regarding Calgary as a center of excellence for Kidney Research.

Dave and Jordana Mathers, Calgary AB, 403-604-5606 dcmathers@shaw.ca - Dave Mathers is a 2nd time Kidney marcher with rapid kidney failure due to an auto immune disease IGA nephropathy. He participated in Kidney March last year and registered early for this year but is now too sick to participate. His daughter Jordana from Edmonton is taking his place and will be doing the walk on his behalf. He is helping her train and that keeps him involved. Dave Mathers was diagnosed with kidney disease over a decade ago, but it wasn't until last year that he decided to walk in the annual Kidney March. He gained perspective since participating in his first Kidney March and knows he is not alone in his illness.

Kate Manns, Calgary 587.999.7355 katemanns@shaw.ca

Kate was first diagnosed when she was 16, with only about 17% kidney function remaining. This was due to an autoimmune disease, that didn't present many recognizable symptoms until things became serious. In a few weeks, her kidney function dropped to 12%, and she was put on peritoneal dialysis. Kate lived on dialysis for about 7 months, all the while, missing school, dance, and time with friends. Graciously, both her dad and uncle applied during this time to donate their own kidneys. They both turned out to be very good matches, and it was decided that her dad would be the donor.

She received her new kidney which she named Karl, on August 10th, 2018, and immediately started to feel better. This year, thanks to Karl, She was able to return to school, and dance over 24 hours a week. She is excited to be attending McGill University next year to study science, and has high hopes that Karl will continue to keep her healthy long past then.

Kate's uncle Dr. Braden Manns is open to interviews accompanying Kate. Contact Michelle Hofer to arrange interview. Braden Manns is the Svare Professor in Health Economics and a Nephrologist at the University of Calgary in the Departments of Medicine and Community Health Sciences. He is the Associate Chief Medical Officer of the Alberta Health Services Strategic Clinical Networks. Dr. Manns is the Past-President of the Canadian Society of Nephrology and co-principal investigator of the Canadians Seeking Solutions and Innovations to Overcome Chronic Kidney Disease a national CIHR funded patient-oriented research network in chronic disease. He is also the co-lead of an Alberta Innovates funded inter-disciplinary team grant investigating chronic disease.

Michelle MacKinnon & family, Ontario. 289-228-5713 michelle.mackinnon@kidney.ca

Michelle's son David was diagnosed with Renal Failure at the age of 17. "We didn't even know what Nephrology meant but assumed it had something to do with kidneys. The doctor explained that David would need emergency dialysis, and with that David broke down. I sat there and watched my beautiful son's spirit completely shatter before my eyes and I had never in my life felt more helpless." Michelle was approved as David's donor and the transplant date was set but postponed three times due to more testing and medical conflicts – rescheduled finally 5 months later, she pleaded with them not to postpone but was not successful. The wait was too long for David and on June 8th, At the age of 18, David passed away of Hypertensive Encephalopathy at the very hour they should have been waking up from their surgeries. Michelle honours David in many ways, one of which is she donated the kidney meant to save David to another mother's child, a two year old boy she had never met. He will turn 6 this April and he is thriving. Another is she participates in Kidney March traveling all the way from Ontario.

The Lehman Family, Kali Lehman (mother), Emma Lehman (daughter), Scott Lehman (father) Kali Lehman: 403-461-1862. Their daughter Emma was born with no kidneys, she had a transplant when she was 2 years old. The family has had a long history with The Kidney Foundation and Kidney March as they have battled Kidney Disease over the past years and will continue to for her whole life. This year the daughter is 16, now old enough to participate in Kidney March. She will be participating with her family and walking with her father for the first time.

Tina Kovacs, Innisfail, 6-time Kidney Marcher: 403-877-2480 / eckelbeach1@gmail.com

Tina is a living kidney donor to her son Taran. When Taran was 9 years old they learned he has a rare form of kidney disease, something her family had never experienced before. Taran had to stop living life like a young boy and became very sick until he got his first transplant in 2009. Taran's transplant was rejected after 24 hours. Tina new she was going to do everything in her motherly power to be his living donor. After a daunting process, Tina became a living donor for her son in 2010. Finally, Taran got to live his life again, and Tina finally got to watch her son be a typical teenager. Today, at 22 Taran is still doing well and they have been participating in Kidney March for six years now.

Donna Keffen, Innisfail, 1st year Marcher: 403-304-4427 / scud1scud@gmail.com

Donna is marching with her husband Allan in honour of her brother Wayne who passed away from kidney disease in 2010, leaving behind his teenage son and wife. When Donna saw the overpass banner for Kidney March, she knew it was the perfect way to honour his life, especially because Sept. 6, the first day of Kidney March would have been Wayne's 63 birthday. Donna saw the everyday struggle that Wayne's family had to go through to cope with his disease and is using Kidney March to turn his tragic ending into a positive way of remembering.

Visit kidneymarch.ca to be inspired.

On Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @KidneyMarch

Email: info@kidneymarch.ca

Call: 1.866.956.2724

Click [here](#) to enjoy our 30 second video.

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