

LOCAL NEWS

# Inaugural Kurling for Kids fundraiser starts off strong with over \$11,000 for pediatric care

Written by Kylee Bailey Saturday, Nov 23 2024, 5:00 AM

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One of the curlers at the Kurling for Kids inaugural fundraising event. Photo by Sarah Hildebrand.

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Last week, curlers gathered in Altona for a fundraising event that was the first of its kind in Manitoba.

The **Kurling for Kids initiative**, which has seen immense success in Quebec, strives to improve pediatric healthcare through its fundraisers.

#### **Curling for children's care**

The province's inaugural event was a success.

"I feel pretty good. Everybody seemed really happy and relaxed," says Sandy Friesen, the Manitoba representative of Kurling for Kids. "The curlers had a great time."

Against the backdrop of throwing rocks and hurrying hard, the event raised funds for the Boundary Trails Health Centre's (BTHC's) Pediatric unit, which Friesen says is the goal of the Kurling initiative.

"The whole idea is raising money . . . to help our kids," she says.

#### **Food, special guests, moving speeches**

The Kurling for Kids night had plenty of engaging features.

Friesen says the meal for the evening was sponsored by Sun Valley Co-op and prepared by Ang's Pizza in Altona. Sarah Hildebrand, a photographer, was present to capture all the "action shots" of the evening.

Along with a delicious meal and talent to capture the event, a variety of speakers were in attendance, including Folkett, executive director of Boundary Trails Health Centre Foundation.

"She came and spoke about the hospital, their important work, and her new relationship with Kurling for Kids. It was a great speech to listen to."

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**An important fixture in the local medical community**, Dr. Don Klassen, was also at the curling fundraiser to give a speech, as well as Dylan Wiebe, a local resident whose child experienced life-threatening afflictions early in life.

“[He talked about] his experiences and how important [it is to] have better facilities and more equipment locally to be able to better care for our children in the area,” says Friesen. “It was very moving. We were really lucky to get him to come and share his experiences.”

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For Friesen, the cherry on top for the evening was the winner of the curling event, which consisted of three junior curlers who were very excited to win their trophies.

“They were skipped by Quinn Hildebrand, who happens to run our junior program,” she says. “That was . . . really nice.”

## Support from every direction

The success of the Kurling for Kids event was made possible by community support. Sun Valley Tire, Friesens Corporation, Alt Marketing, Little Rock Printing, North of 49, CBIM Marketing, Red River Mutual, Oma’s Kitchen, Only Local, Bunge, JG Chemicals, the Town of Altona, and K.A.T Construction and Rentals lent their support.

Friesen says that just before the event, raffle prizes and donations started to pour in from the sponsors.

“I think 2 days before the event we had raised maybe about \$6,000 and then it jumped to \$7,000 and then all of a sudden it was \$8,000,” she says. “Then on the day, we ended up [with] over \$11,000. That’s awesome.”

The BTHC Foundation already has some idea of where the funds will land.

“I do believe they’re going to use the money to purchase some saturation monitors — that was on their list of [what] they would like to have, but they will use it where it’s needed most,” says Friesen. “It will be going to their Pediatric program to help expand [that].”

## Future plans

In the wake of the success of Manitoba’s first Kurling for Kids event, Friesen is already looking for ways to grow the initiative.

“Hopefully we can have a date that works better for more people, and we are hopefully going to do a little bit better with advertising,” she says. “We would [also] like to put the challenge out there to other curling clubs to get in contact with Kurling for Kids to see if they would like to sponsor their own event because that would be great.”

Friesen is optimistic that since the community of Altona took to the curling event, communities like Morden, Winkler, and Carman could also respond similarly.

“The more the merrier,” she says.

In the end, Friesen is thankful to Altona Curling Club, the curlers, the sponsors, and everyone who made the Kurling for Kids event a memorable one that will have a positive impact on children in the region.

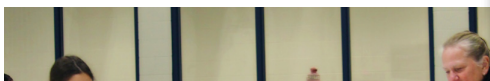
See the gallery below for photos of Altona’s Kurling for Kids event taken by Sarah Hildebrand.

*With files from Zack Driedger*

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