



## **BACKGROUNDER**

*For immediate release*

**Victoria Hospice**

**May 14, 2009**

### **BMO SWIMATHON FOR VICTORIA HOSPICE**

**History:** Organized by the group, “Friends of Hospice”, the first Swimathon took place on May 1, 1986 at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre Pool, the brainchild of Nellie Stock. David and Nellie’s son, Robert, had died two years previously on May 1 on the Hospice program and the event was intended to commemorate his life.

In 2008, 400 participants on 37 teams raised \$140,000 for Victoria Hospice.

**Community Partners:** 14 community partners support BMO Swimathon for Victoria Hospice. Their generosity and community spirit have been indispensable to the success of the event. The 2009 BMO Swimathon for Victoria Hospice partners are:

BMO Bank of Montreal

Island Farms

98.5 THE OCEAN

Custom House

Bob Mehr Compounding Pharmacies

Thrifty Foods

Times Colonist

Inn at Laurel Point

District of Saanich

BMO Employee Charitable Foundation

CHEK NEWS

WildPlay Element Parks

It’s You Photography

Bayshore Home Health

#### **Fast Facts about Victoria Hospice and Swimathon:**

- BMO Swimathon is the biggest fundraiser of the year for Victoria Hospice end-of-life care
- Nearly half of Victoria Hospice’s almost \$7 million annual budget comes from community donations that support quality end-of-life care for the dying and those who love them.
- Each year, Victoria Hospice helps over 2,500 people, including more than 800 patients and their family members.
- Victoria Hospice provides quality end-of-life care to patients in the comfort of their own homes, on our 17-bed palliative care in-patient unit at the Royal Jubilee Hospital, or through medical consultation at other health care facilities.
- The Victoria Hospice Palliative Response Team provides 24-hour on-call crisis consultation and treatment visits to patients at home, preventing stressful and expensive admission to hospital.
- Victoria Hospice counsellors provide expert emotional support to both patients and family members.
- Victoria Hospice care does not end with a death – bereavement support continues for up to one year following the death.
- Victoria Hospice offers professional courses and publications to help teach others how to take better care of the dying and those who love them.

For further information, contact:

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