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## **NEWS RELEASE - REVISED**

*For immediate release*

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**Victoria Hospice**

### **BMO SWIMATHON FOR VICTORIA HOSPICE NETS NEW RECORD**

**Victoria, B. C.** – A record \$230,000 was raised from this past weekend's 24<sup>th</sup> BMO Swimathon for Victoria Hospice, Eileen Harper, event chair, announced today.

“I want to give a huge pat on the back to our 300 team members who thought of so many imaginative fund raising ideas to break last year's record of \$140,000,” says Harper. “You have demonstrated that creativity and ingenuity, mixed in with a good splash of team spirit and fun, can yield tremendous results for our year's biggest fundraiser.”

These funds will go to support Victoria Hospice programs and services such as bedside care both in the Richmond Pavilion and at home; pain and symptom management; volunteer, counselling, spiritual and bereavement support; research as well as ongoing education and skill development training for care providers.

Corporate sponsor BMO, under the team name BMO Nemos, reached its target of \$50,000. This total includes donations raised by the bank's Vancouver Island Vice-President Mike Suzuki who generously agreed to a Mohawk hairstyle and the BMO Shred-a-thon, in partnership with Iron Mountain Victoria, where employees shredded the public's personal and business papers in return for a donation. The Willis Point team netted \$16,000 from its “Hop for Hospice” dinner and dance for friends and colleagues.

“The success of our annual Swimathon can be attributed not only to our teams' fund raising abilities but also to the support we receive from our community partners,” says Harper. “This year's total includes more than \$80,000 contributed by fourteen corporate sponsors for advertising, promotions, food and prizes to raise awareness of the event to a new level.”

A total of 38 teams registered for the 2009 BMO Swimathon for Victoria Hospice, two of which elected to be “virtual” swimmers, by participating only in the fundraising activities.

For 29 years, Victoria Hospice has provided skilled, compassionate end-of-life care as well as bereavement support to Greater Victorians and continues to teach others how to take better care of the dying and those who love them. It is now easier to make a donation online with the Victoria Hospice and Palliative Care Foundation's new website – go to [www.victoriahospicefoundation.ca](http://www.victoriahospicefoundation.ca) and click on the left side to donate today.

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