

# 2023 Annual Report

## Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan Branch



*Bell's Beach, La Ronge SK Photo Credit: Kandis Riese*

## 2023 Annual Report – Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan Branch

The Saskatchewan Branch of the Lifesaving Society is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors which operates within the Carver Governance Model.

The Saskatchewan Branch has been incorporated as a not-for-profit organization since 1965. The Branch is also a registered Canadian charity.

### **2023/24 Board of Directors**

Cheyenne Esmond, President (Regina)  
Rick Stilling (Saskatoon)  
Andy Cook (Regina)  
Lisa Watson (Elrose)  
Sheri-Lynne Fedorowich (Yorkton)  
Krystin Therens (Moose Jaw)  
Lauren Garner (Colonsay)

### **Saskatchewan Representative on National Board of Directors**

Rick Stilling, Director for Saskatchewan

### **Member Representative to National Society**

Nicole Jerkovits/Cheyenne Esmond

### **Branch Governor**

David Bishop

### **Branch Staff**

Shelby Rushton, Chief Executive Officer  
Logan Gamble, Special Project Coordinator  
Deb Kokott, Program Director  
William Stoudt, Administrative Manager

### **National Commission Volunteer Members**

Lauren Haubrich, Training Program  
Commission  
Graham Erickson, Safety Management  
Commission  
Kelsey Ursu, Public Education Commission

## 2023/24 Board of Directors



*Cheyenne Esmond, President*



*Rick Stilling, Past President and National Board Member*



*Andy Cook*



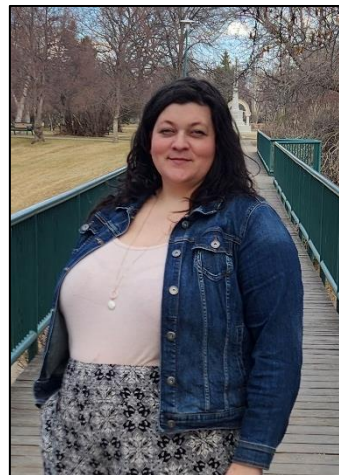
*Sheri-Lynne Fedorowich*



*Lisa Watson*



*Lauren Garner*



*Krystin Leptich-Therens*

## Message from the President

2023 for the Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan Branch has been the year of growth and advancement.

The Saskatchewan Branch saw growth in sales of manuals and lesson materials such as crests and seals. It also saw increased award certifications. The increase in certifications was a welcome trend update as the Covid-19 pandemic led to a decline in our program statistics for two years. However, the lifting of pandemic measures, the completion of the Red Cross Swim Transition, and the addition of many new Lifesaving Society Affiliates across the province made a great impact. More Affiliates and an increase in the number of program participants means a growing knowledge base and furtherance of our mission and promotion of drowning prevention education.



Growth, however, wasn't the only theme of 2023. Advancement was close behind as the Branch made the first step in offering a new inclusivity program, Swim Abilities®, within its course offerings. Saskatchewan became the second Lifesaving Society Branch to begin the implementation of Swim Abilities® which was developed by the Alberta Branch of the Lifesaving Society. Eight Instructor Trainers were trained as new Swim Abilities® Trainers. These eight Trainers will now be able to provide Swim Abilities® Instructor courses in our province and the new instructors will, in turn, be able to provide the Swim Abilities® program at their aquatic facilities.

And that is not all. Growth and advancement in the present also require consideration of the future, and at the close of 2023 we saw the initiation of the Lifeguard Recruitment and Retention Project. Lead by our CEO, Shelby Rushton, and long-time volunteer, Ken Bartnik, the project involved facilitating virtual focus groups with the intention of establishing why lifeguards and instructors stay or leave the aquatics industry. This project has continued into 2024 and the initial analysis of the findings will be presented at our Provincial Aquatic Conference in Prince Albert.

I have had the privilege of working with my fellow Directors and the CEO in providing governance and strategic direction for the Branch in 2023 and into 2024. These individuals are Andy Cook from Regina; Sheri-Lynne Fedorowich from Yorkton; Lisa Watson from Elrose; Krystin Leptich-Therens from Moose Jaw; Lauren Garner from Colonsay; Rick Stilling from Saskatoon, myself, Cheyenne Esmond from Regina, and our CEO, Shelby Rushton. Thank you for your work, your energy, and your dedication to the Branch and to our drowning prevention mission.

The Board of Directors would like to recognize the tremendous efforts of our Branch staff in 2023. A special thanks to Branch CEO Shelby Rushton as well as Logan Gamble, Deb Kokott, Will Stoudt, and our summer students, Chloe Smith, Blake Russell, and Lara Mutimer for all their hard work and outstanding

contributions during another busy year.

Our new three-year strategic plan was developed in 2023 and the Board and Branch staff are excited about the upcoming year and look forward to continuing this trend of growth and advancement in 2024. With this anticipation also comes a shameless pitch to you, the membership, to stay tuned for the launch of our first-ever Drowning Prevention Week Online Auction as well as an online 50/50 raffle. With these events in mind, coupled with all your hard work in 2024, the Board and Branch look forward to continuing to work with each of our volunteers, leaders, and Affiliates in the promotion of drowning prevention education in Saskatchewan.

Respectfully,

*Cheyenne Esmond*

Cheyenne Esmond

Board President, Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan

## Message from the CEO

It's been another whirlwind year and we are busier than ever at the Lifesaving Society.

With the Swim Transition fully completed as of June 30, 2023, the Branch had opportunity to work on other initiatives such as the introduction of the Swim Abilities® program to our province and the Lifeguard Recruitment and Retention Focus Group project. We also were able to once again host an Investiture ceremony at Government House and deliver the first face-to-face Aquatic Leaders Training Symposium since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Behind the scenes, we worked on improving our accounting systems, piloted online certification cards through our Member Management database system, and updated our leadership recertification system.

All the while, the staff supported our ever-growing number of new Affiliate members and award holders, helping them to become familiar with the Society's programs, services, and policies.

When not at the office doing phone calls, virtual meetings, and report/document writing, we were in our vehicles travelling to various communities to do Affiliate visits, present public education, teach OAST and leadership, deliver inservice training, and provide safety management advice to swimming pools and waterfronts.

And the year did not come without its challenges: our long-time Administration Manager, Kelsey Gallagher sadly left the Branch after 10 years to pursue a job in her education field of fine art; our financial auditor of three years gave notice a week before last year's AGM that he would not be able to provide us audit services for the 2023 fiscal year, and due to my own family and friends injuries and



ailing, I became a remote worker for a time.

That said, we made it through the year and we did it successfully. Our program numbers are at record highs and we ended the year with revenue surplus of over a \$30,000.

I give sincere thanks to my staff (Deb, Logan, and Will) for sticking through 2023 with me, to the Board for their support and continued leadership, to our Affiliates, instructors, and trainers for their hand in delivering our programs and providing safe swimming experiences, and to our volunteers who are the silent worker bees of the Society. Truly, thank you.

Respectfully,

*Shelby Rushton*

Shelby Rushton

CEO – Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan

# Investiture Ceremony for Volunteers and Rescue Award Recipients

April 28, 2023, Government House Regina, SK



On April 28<sup>th</sup>, the Branch held its Investiture ceremony hosted by His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan at Government House in Regina. This special ceremony recognizes the work of individuals who have made significant volunteer contributions to Society and its mission. It also honours individuals who have attempted a rescue (successful or unsuccessful) in an aquatic setting.

### **Service Commendation**

Reid Braaten, Shelby McLeod, Sheri-Lynne Fedorowich, Andy Cook, Lisa Watson, Karli Hufnagel, Courtney Domoney, and Katelyn Kaufman.

### **Service Medal**

Cheyenne Esmond, Kendria Symak, Lauren Haubrich, Nicole Jerkovits, and Shelly Howe.

### **Bar to the Service Medal**

Colleen Scott and Melissa Shaw.

### **Second Bar to the Service Medal**

Bill Cook

### **Bar to Service Cross**

Rhonda Young-Pilon

### **Honourary Life Governor**

Michael Brenholen

Rick Stilling

## Rescue Commendations

**June 17 2022**

**Barney's Beach Buffalo Pound Lake**

**Kevin Hembroff, North Shore**

Tim Hembroff, North Shore

Terry Palaschak, Moose Jaw

Mona Palaschak, Moose Jaw

**July 16, 2022**

**Halkett Lake, Prince Albert National Park**

Gordan Dupre, Prince Albert

Brennan Dupre, Saskatoon

Deborah Halverson, Kinistino

Andrew Poulin, Saskatoon

## Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal



On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Shelby Rushton and Lauren Haubrich were awarded the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal by His Honour, the Honourable Russ Mirasty. The Saskatchewan Board of Directors nominated both Shelby and Lauren for the medal for the ongoing contributions to the Lifesaving Society.

This is a commemorative medal created to mark the 70th anniversary of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada.

7000 medals were awarded in Saskatchewan.



## Aquatic Leaders Training Symposium May 23 – 27, 2023, Yorkton, SK



Since

the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Branch has delivered the Aquatic Leaders Training Symposium in live, virtual sessions. In 2023, we were excited to finally deliver the annual symposium in person at the Access Communications Waterpark in Yorkton.

The symposium candidates were from across the province including Regina, Saskatoon, North Battleford, Carlyle, Swift Current, Melfort, Indian Head, and Yorkton. It was a fun-filled, educational week for all, including the instructors! Certification statistics for the week are: 14 certified as NLS Instructors; 10 certified as First Aid Instructors; 8 certified in Aquatic Supervisor Training.

The Branch would like to thank Sarah Lipoth for teaching with Shelby and Deb throughout the symposium, as well as Graham Erickson, who assisted in teaching the Aquatic Supervisor Training course.

## Occupational Aquatic Safety Training (OAST)



The OAST program continues to grow in demand and in certifications. While OAST has typically been utilized for youth group homes there is also an increase in organizations that work with youth in, on, and around water.

Course Module	2023	2022
OAST Basic	306	146
OAST Advanced	81	58
OAST Boat Rescue	5	16

## Lifesaving, Lifeguarding, and Leadership Program Statistics

### 5-Year Comparison

This is a snapshot of the Society’s traditional programs. 2023 is the first year since 2019 that is not heavily influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic or the Red Cross Swim Transition and demonstrates the recovery and growth of these programs. Training and recertification are at or above 2019 levels with strong growth in the Bronze Medal Programs leading candidates towards National Lifeguard and Instructor awards. This has been possible through the continued delivery of programs by Affiliates, Instructors, Examiners, and Mentors and their dedication to training the next generation of lifeguards and instructors in Saskatchewan.

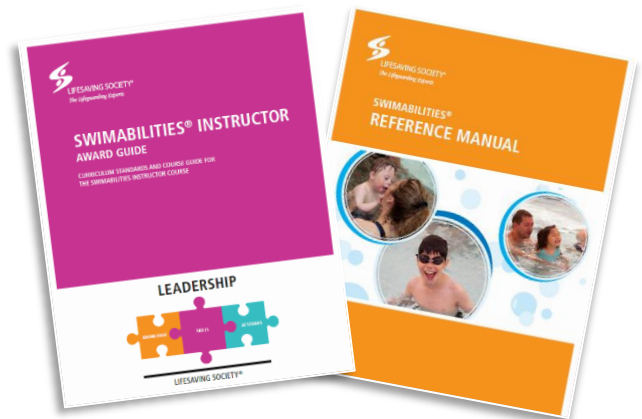
Award	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Bronze Star	128	19	77	106	114
Bronze Medallion	786	207	637	806	991
Bronze Cross	659	214	471	636	792
Bronze Recerts	88	31	57	76	26
National Lifeguard Pool	332	137	447	393	498
National Lifeguard Pool Recert	438	291	395	530	470
Swim for Life Instructor	90	39	161	736	520
Swim for Life Instructor Recert	179	96	155	70	175
Lifesaving Instructor	80	34	137	173	237
Lifesaving Instructor Recert	180	88	152	74	169

### New Program – SwimAbilities®

After two years of discussion with the Alberta Lifesaving Society Branch, a plan to train SwimAbilities® Trainers in Saskatchewan was agreed upon and implemented.

Eight experienced Lifesaving Society Trainers participated in a SwimAbilities Trainer Clinic. This involved an on-line assignment, a 5-hour virtual, live training session, and co-teaches on a SwimAbilities® Instructor course. The training was led by Alberta staff and Trainers, Alex Parker and Michelle Sydney.

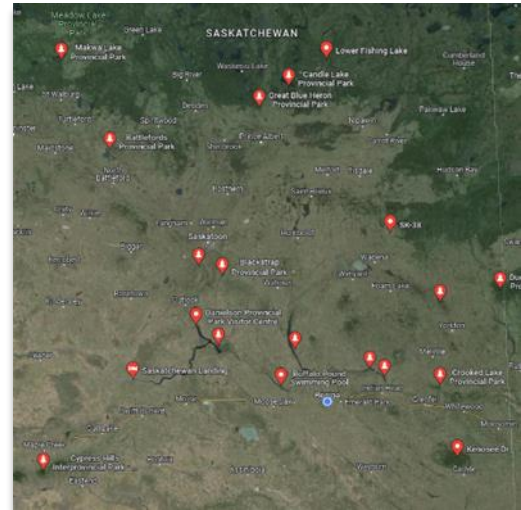
SwimAbilities is a community-based, 4-level swimming program geared for participants ages 3 and up with special needs. The goal is to have participants swimming as independently and safely as possible. SwimAbilities is a basic learn-to-swim program with the skills broken down into small, achievable steps.



## Lifejacket Loaner Stations

A number of new Lifejacket Loaner Stations were opened in partnership with the Ministry of Sport, Culture, and Recreation. Each Lifejacket Loaner Station contains various sizes of lifejackets for members of the public to borrow completely free of charge. The borrowing works on the honour system: anyone can borrow the lifejackets for any aquatic activity such as swimming or boating, and then return it to the station when they are finished before they leave for the day. These are now available in 21 Provincial Parks and recreation areas across the province.

- ◆ Regina Beach Recreational Site
- ◆ Echo Valley Provincial Park
- ◆ Great Blue Heron Provincial Park
- ◆ Pike Lake Provincial Park
- ◆ Katepwa Point Provincial Park
- ◆ Danielson Provincial Park
- ◆ The Battlefords Provincial Park
- ◆ Moose Mountain Provincial Park
- ◆ Buffalo Pound Provincial Park
- ◆ Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park
- ◆ Blackstrap Provincial Park
- ◆ Candle Lake Provincial Park
- ◆ Crooked Lake Provincial Park
- ◆ Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park
- ◆ Douglas Provincial Park
- ◆ Duck Mountain Provincial Park
- ◆ Makwa Lake Provincial Park
- ◆ Narrow Hills Provincial Park
- ◆ Rowan's Ravine Provincial Park
- ◆ Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park
- ◆ Greenwater Lake Provincial Park



## Public Education

In 2023 the Branch did a combination of provincial park visits, in person classroom presentations, and online presentations. A combination of staff and volunteers assisted in carrying out presentations, safety days, and activity sessions for the Branch. The following are some of our significant public education engagements:

- The New Canadian Water Smart Education program was delivered virtually and in person totaling of 7 online and 4 in person presentations. We educated approximately 150 Adults and 70 children of various ages during these sessions.
- Regina Downtown Farmers Market - July 12<sup>th</sup> - Summer staff had the opportunity to engage with over 400 people about being Water Smart®. Brochures and Boreal Besties colouring books were handed out, and passers-by also had an opportunity to try out CPR on our CPR mannikins.
- We attended the 4th Annual Cade Sprackman Safety Day in Hudson Bay in June. This event was organized by the Saskatchewan Safety Council and was attended by several safety organizations. Grades K - 12 participated in an Amazing Safety Quest which was a non-timed, obstacle course that lead the students to various safety stations with a number of safety organizations including the Lifesaving Society. The Society's station included demonstrations and student practice with rescue aids and CPR skills, followed by a water safety quiz.
- We travelled to several provincial parks to lead come and go water safety activities and demonstrations. These parks were Rowan's Ravine, Moose Mountain, Crooked Lake, Buffalo Pound, and Echo Valley. Each of these sessions was approximately 2 hours in length. We also attended Greenwater Provincial Park's day-long Water Safety Day in which we reached over 250 people through activities, demonstrations, and greetings.
- Canadian Forces Base 15 Wing Moose Jaw - We went out to 15 Wing Moose Jaw and set up a come and go activity station. Both at the spray pad and at the pool lobby. Handed out colouring books and pamphlets.
- Our partnership with Saskatchewan Foster Families continues and 8 Parent Lifeguard presentations were delivered virtually training 107 people.



## National Drowning Prevention Week

National Drowning Prevention Week ran from July 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023. Mayoral proclamations for National Drowning Prevention Week were completed in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and Moosomin. In addition, the Honourable Laura Ross, Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport proclaimed National Drowning Prevention Week in the Province of Saskatchewan.

This year's daily messages were:

- **Sunday: The Drowning Problem.** Over 400 Canadians die in preventable water-related incidents annually. Even one drowning is one too many.
- **Monday: Supervise Children.** Always directly supervise children around the water - if you are not within arms' reach, you've gone too far.
- **Tuesday: Boating Safety.** Choose it. Use it. Always wear a lifejacket when in a boat.
- **Wednesday: Learn to Swim.** In most drownings, the victim never intended to go in the water and was often close to safety – could you survive a sudden and unexpected fall into the water?
- **Thursday: Stay Sober In, On, and Around the Water.** Alcohol consumption is a factor in many water related fatalities. Both alcohol and cannabis use impair balance, judgment, and reflexes. Stay sober when in, on or around the water.
- **Friday: Open Water Safety.** Make smart choices before going in, on or around the water.
- **Saturday: You can save a life! Yours, and someone else's.** Take a learn-to-swim, lifesaving or first aid class today.



## Northern Water Smart Program



The Northern Water Smart® Program was downsized in 2023 as the Branch undergoes consultations with Northern Saskatchewan communities in restructuring what programs will be offered in the future. Swim for Life and Swim Patrol lessons, as well as Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross were delivered in LaRonge.

Thank you to Lara Mutimer for being a terrific instructor this summer. Lara joined Branch staff Deb Kokott and Logan Gamble in LaRonge to provide aquatic programming.



2023 Financial Highlights  
Auditor: Dudley & Company LLP Chartered Professional Accountants

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

ASSETS	2023	2022
Cash	\$209,239	\$88,311
Term Deposits	104,550	101,159
Accounts Receivable	72,395	137,033
Inventory	17,844	17,416
Prepaid expenses	3,165	1,912
Capital Assets	95,875	99,706
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$505,035</b>	<b>\$445,537</b>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$46,189	\$31,553
Wages Payable	11,500	-
GST Payable	730	1,662
Provincial sales tax payable	6,332	2,392
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>64,741</b>	<b>35,607</b>
NET ASSETS		
	440,294	409,930
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$505,035</b>	<b>\$445,537</b>

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

REVENUES	2023	2022
Sask Lotteries Trust Fund	\$94,860	\$94,860
Service Fees	7,925	960
Shipping and Handling	6,480	7,165
Northern WaterSmart education	5,700	32,516
General public education	7,443	-
Branch Program	2,378	6,253
Examination Fees	115,004	71,607
Lifeguard Depot	3,618	5,392
Literature and recognition material	200,846	121,169
BOAT Program	1,497	1,736
Occupational Aquatic Safety Training	90,150	49,400
IT & Instructor Training	240	6,167
Affiliation Fees	19,905	11,525
Training and Education Programs	211,674	61,557
Interest	6,087	1,925
Training Symposium Event	1,627	-
Training Programs	2,985	-
Federal Grants	-	11,760
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$566,745</b>	<b>\$422,435</b>
<b>Cost of sales</b>	<b>115,895</b>	<b>52,068</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>450,486</b>	<b>370,367</b>

<b>Expenses</b>		
Staff Wages & Benefits	\$249,629	\$254,323
Utilities	4,759	3,693
Repairs and Maintenance	2,425	3,829
Amortization	5,801	6,479
Professional Fees	15,687	33,584
Interest and Bank Charges	5,401	3,347
National Levy	28,325	14,582
Program Costs	1,228	2,507
Advertising and Promotion	7,026	7,785
Computer and IT expenses	4,581	4,698
Office	20,283	20,356
Telephone	4,232	3,933
Northern Water Smart education	2,691	15,761
Office Expenses	39,460	35,242
Public Education and Programs	41,348	16,808
Bad Debts	407	13,744
Board Meetings	789	860
Travel Expenses	6,206	2,985
Employee Benefits	28,723	27,514
Business taxes, licenses and memberships	85	55
Property Taxes	5,990	6,555
Insurance and licenses	6,040	5,255
Training	20,178	7,390
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$420,486</b>	<b>\$439,235</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$30,364</b>	<b>\$(68,868)</b>

We are grateful to the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association and Saskatchewan Lotteries for their financial grants which, in part, contribute toward our programs.

