

2024 Annual Report

Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan Branch



Bell's Beach, La Ronge SK

2024 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.

2024/25 Board of Directors

Cheyenne Esmond, President (Regina)
Lisa Watson (Elrose)
Krystin Therens (Moose Jaw)
Lauren Garner (Colonsay)
Ken Bartnik (Regina)
Nicole Jerkovits (Regina)
Morgan Ferraton (Assiniboia)

Saskatchewan Representative on National Board of Directors

Rick Stilling, Director for Saskatchewan

Member Representative to National Society

Cheyenne Esmond

Branch Governor

David Bishop

Branch Staff

Shelby Rushton, Chief Executive Officer
Logan Gamble, Special Project Coordinator
Deb Kokott, Program Director
Sana Karedia, Administrative Manager
William Stoudt, Administrative Assistant
Lexie Tondevold, Summer Staff

National Commission Volunteer Members

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

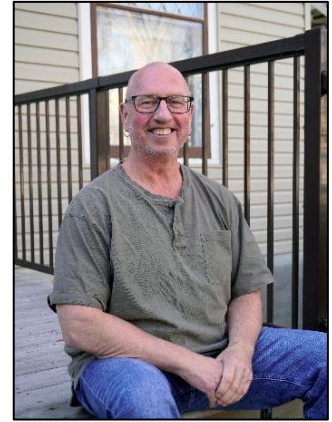
2024/25 Board of Directors



Cheyenne Esmond, President



Nicole Jerkovits



Ken Bartnik



Morgan Ferraton



Lisa Watson



Lauren Garner



Krystin Leptich-Therens

Message from the President

As we reflect on the past year of 2024, I am once again proud to share the significant progress and resilience demonstrated by the Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan Branch. The year 2024 has been marked by meaningful advancements in program delivery, strategic partnerships, and a steadfast commitment to our mission of preventing drowning and water-related injury.



Our staff and volunteers have shown exceptional dedication in navigating both operational and personal challenges. We recognize and appreciate the strength and leadership of our CEO, Shelby Rushton, who, despite experiencing personal loss early in the year, continued to guide the organization with compassion and professionalism. The Branch office-maintained continuity in service delivery, thanks to a committed team including Logan, Shelby, Will, Sana, and Deb, working in full-time capacities.

Key initiatives helped shape our impact in 2024. The Lifeguard Recruitment and Retention Focus Group Project, led by Shelby Rushton and Ken Bartnik, provided valuable insights into the motivations and barriers experienced by aquatic professionals. This work is helping us build strategies that will support the growth and sustainability of our sector. We look forward to sharing the findings and implementing recommendations that will strengthen our community of trainers, lifeguards, and aquatic instructors.

Our efforts in drowning prevention remain grounded in solid research. With the support of volunteers and staff, we completed a monumental task of compiling fatal drowning data from 2018 to 2022. This important work not only informs our public education strategies but reaffirms our role as a provincial leader in water safety advocacy.

In addition, our continued collaboration with municipalities and Indigenous communities has expanded access to lifesaving programming. These partnerships are vital in making aquatic safety education more inclusive and accessible.

Financial stewardship has remained strong, with the appointment of the accounting firm, Dudley and Company, as our new auditors and the successful completion of our annual audit cycle. Regular policy compliance reviews affirm our commitment to ethical governance and operational excellence.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend our sincere thanks to our Affiliates, staff, volunteers, and community partners. Your ongoing support and engagement are the foundation of our collective success.

Let us continue this momentum with purpose and passion.

Respectfully,

Cheyenne Esmond

Cheyenne Esmond

Board President, Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan

Message from the CEO

One year ago, we gathered at the Annual General Meeting of Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan. Ten years ago, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of our Saskatchewan Branch. And sixty years ago, the very first AGM brought together individuals dedicated to a shared mission: preventing drowning and water-related injury. Over these decades, volunteers, aquatic and recreation professionals, lifeguards, instructors, Branch staff, and Affiliates have worked tirelessly toward this cause.



Today, I want to focus on the last ten years. Our Branch has continued to grow and thrive, and together and so much has been accomplished. Here are some of the notable milestones:

- The Find-a-Member feature was launched on our website
- The Ministry of Education added Lifeguard 30L to their list of dual credits
- Bronze Medal revisions, delivered by virtual live workshops
- National Lifeguard revisions, introducing asynchronous learning modules
- Critical leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic, helping Affiliates, lifeguards, and instructors navigate safety and facility re-openings
- Swim Transition from Canadian Red Cross to Lifesaving Society programs
- Rejuvenation of Lifesaving Sport Coaching Clinics and Saskatchewan Tele-Games
- Introduction of the Swim Abilities® program in Saskatchewan
- Introduction of Safety Management Services, including facility audits, lifeguard positioning analyses, and the continuation of aquatic safety plan reviews
- Retirement of printed certification wallet cards and implementation of digital certifications

These achievements would not have been possible without the incredible leaders in our organization. The National Trainers, the many Lifesaving Society Instructors, Examiners, and Mentors at all levels including SWIM, Lifesaving Instructor, National Lifeguard, and First Aid.

The programs, services and the people (the Membership) of the Lifesaving Society help to keep Saskatchewan residents and visitors safe while being in, on and around water. This is not just through direct intervention such as water rescue and providing first aid and resuscitation, but through prevention, education, and advocacy. Lifeguarding matters. Teaching and training matters. Leading, advocating, and role modeling matters. From individual volunteers to municipal aquatics departments, each contribution strengthens our collective effort. And these efforts are something we should be so very proud of.

Now, let's look ahead—to the next year, the next decade, and the next sixty years to our vision of a Canada free from drowning and water-related injury.

Respectfully,

Shelby Rushton

Shelby Rushton

CEO – Lifesaving Society Saskatchewan

Aquatic Leaders Training Symposium May 7-11, 2024, Moose Jaw, SK

The Branch's annual Aquatic Leaders Training Symposium took place in Moose Jaw the week of May 7-11, 2024.

Eleven National Lifeguard Instructor candidates, 8 First Aid Instructor candidates, and 6 Aquatic Supervisor candidates participated in training and networking. Candidates attended from communities province-wide including North Battleford, Churchbridge, Esterhazy, Saskatoon, Kindersley, Moose Jaw, and Regina.



It was amazing to get to know Society members from across the province and to spend time with them. The talent and passion in our field is evident in the work and commitment of these new instructors. The future is bright for the Society in Saskatchewan!

Lifesaving Trainer Clinic

Ten enthusiastic candidates from communities across the province including Regina, North Battleford, Melfort, Yorkton, Moose jaw, and Saskatoon joined us in Regina at the Lifesaving Trainer Clinic for three days of learning and leadership.

These candidates are now on their way to begin their apprenticeships under the guidance of various Trainer Mentors in the province as they begin to teach new Swim and Lifesaving Instructors.

As a special bonus, Shelly Howe and Deb Kokott apprenticed their National Trainer certification under the guidance of National Trainer, Shelby Rushton. Congratulations to Shelly and Deb!



Occupational Aquatic Safety Training (OAST)

The Occupational Aquatic Safety Training program continues to grow in demand and in certifications. Examples of organizations that utilize the OAST program include youth group homes, such as Ranch Ehrlo and Eagles Nest. Courses were delivered across the province both in pools and lakes.

We'd like to thank the following instructors for assisting us in the delivery of the OAST program in 2024: Michael Brenholen, Brittani Dunsing, Jessica Yaworski, Ken Barnik, Debra Kokott, and Logan Gamble.

Course Module	2024	2023
OAST Basic	322	306
OAST Advanced	102	81
OAST Boat Rescue	29	5



National Drowning Prevention Week

National Drowning Prevention Week ran from July 21st to 27th, 2024. Mayoral proclamations for National Drowning Prevention Week were completed in Regina, Prince Albert, Luseland and Moosomin.

A media event was held at Echo Valley Provincial Park where Shelby, Branch CEO, was able to address the media regarding the public education campaign, followed by a media scrum. The Honourable Laura Ross, Minister of Parks, Culture, and Sport then presented Shelby with the proclamation from the province for National Drowning Prevention Week.

Thank you to our amazing Affiliates across the province for once again participating in National Drowning Prevention Week.



5-Year Comparison

The year 2024 has demonstrated consistency and overall growth in the Society’s traditional programs. While Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross experienced significant growth in 2023, 2024 saw slightly lower numbers; however, they still represent the second-highest annual certifications on record.

National Lifeguard certifications reached an all-time high of 570, with recertifications also showing an increase—partly due to the 118 Red Cross Lifeguard transfers in 2022, as those lifeguards were due for recertification this year. The total number of National Lifeguard original certifications and recertifications has steadily risen, moving from 923 in 2022 to 1006 in 2023, and reaching 1139 in 2024, reflecting a growing number of certified lifeguards in Saskatchewan.

A similar upward trend is evident in Swim for Life Instructor recertifications, which jumped from 179 in 2023 to 409 in 2024, influenced by the 889 Red Cross Water Safety Instructors transfers during the SWIM Transition in 2022. Additionally, Lifesaving Instructor certifications reached their highest annual level, along with increased Lifesaving Instructor recertifications.

The steady and increasing rate of recertifications for National Lifeguard, Swim for Life Instructor, and Lifesaving Instructor programs highlights improved retention within the industry. Of the 247 Lifesaving Instructors trained and recertified in 2022, only 53 (21%) did not recertify in 2024. Comparatively, 2023 saw a 32% loss rate from 2021’s original certifications and recertifications.

The improved retention of experienced staff is essential for developing future aquatic leaders. This progress is made possible through the ongoing dedication of Affiliates, Instructors, Examiners, and Mentors, who continue to deliver programs and train the next generation of lifeguards and instructors in Saskatchewan.

Award	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bronze Star	19	77	106	120	145
Bronze Medallion	207	637	806	1019	931
Bronze Cross	214	471	636	816	785
Bronze Recerts	31	57	76	27	18
National Lifeguard Pool	137	447	393	516	570
National Lifeguard Pool Recert	291	395	530	490	569
Swim for Life Instructor	39	161	736	542	495
Swim for Life Instructor Recert	96	155	70	179	409
Lifesaving Instructor	34	137	173	255	280
Lifesaving Instructor Recert	88	152	74	172	194

Lifejacket Loaner Stations

In collaboration with the Ministry of Sport, Culture, and Recreation, several Lifejacket Loaner Stations have been established across the province. These stations provide lifejackets in various sizes, allowing members of the public to borrow them free of charge.

Operating on an honour system, the program enables individuals to borrow a lifejacket for aquatic activities such as swimming or boating. Users are expected to return the lifejacket to the station at the end of their activity, ensuring continued availability for others.

As of 2024, Lifejacket Loaner Stations are accessible in 21 Provincial Parks and recreation areas throughout Saskatchewan, enhancing water safety and promoting responsible aquatic recreation.

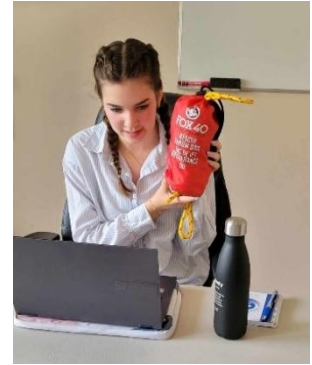
- ◆ Regina Beach Recreational Site
- ◆ Echo Valley Provincial Park
- ◆ Great Blue Heron Provincial Park
- ◆ Pike Lake Provincial Park
- ◆ Katepwa Point Provincial Park
- ◆ Danielson Provincial Park
- ◆ The Battlefords Provincial Park
- ◆ Moose Mountain Provincial Park
- ◆ Buffalo Pound Provincial Park
- ◆ 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

This summer the Branch did a combination of provincial park visits, in person classroom presentations, and online presentations. Our summer student Lexie Tondenvold was able to dedicate a large amount of her time to public education programming. The following are some of our significant public education initiatives:

- The New Canadian Water Smart Education program was delivered virtually in 15 online presentations. Presentations were delivered to Regina Open Door Society, Battleford Immigration Centre, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, Southwest Newcomer Welcome Centre. We reached approximately 206 Adults and 137 Children and Youth of various ages.
- In partnership with the Prairie Central Sport, Culture, and Recreation District, we visited Outlook Regional Park to promote water safety with an emphasis on safety in and around rivers. Logan and Will led activities to 25 children/youth adults that educated about lifejackets, water safety, and adult supervision near water.
- We developed a French New Canadian presentation at the request of Service d'Accueil et d'Inclusion Francophone (SAIF-SK). Our bilingual summer student, Lexie, delivered the presentation in French to 16 adults with great response from the SAIF and desire to continue in future years.
- We expanded our public education resources with brochures in Cree, Ukrainian, Farsi, Hindi, and Tagalog. The public was excited to find resources in their first language and often took several from our booths to share with friends and family.
- Three Provincial Parks were visited with various come and go activities. Between all the parks we had approximately 70 active children/youth/adult participants and 320 informational interactions.
 - Buffalo Pound – July 13
 - Echo Valley – August 9
 - Rowins Rowan's Ravine – August 10
- Three Parent Lifeguard presentations in collaboration with the City of Regina at Mamaweyatitan Centre.
- It was an early morning for Logan and Lexie in July as they joined CTV Regina Morning Live at Wascana Lake. Logan and Lexie took turns in the three segments talk about PFD's, staying within arms reach of young children, and throw rescues.
- Additional effort and time were invested into developing new multimedia public education resources with videos developed by staff and Lifesaving Society volunteers for use on social media and presentations.
- New handout materials were developed including a boat safety checklist postcard. These were made available at several local boat launches and a digital copy was added to our website. We also partnered with Fresh Air Experience in Regina to hand them out with customers purchasing new kayaks, canoes, and paddle boards.
- In October, Program Director, Debra Kokott travelled to Hudson Bay for the Cade Sprackman Safety Day. Organized by the Saskatchewan Safety Council, the Society joined other organizations and businesses in supporting occupational safety to grade 7-12 students in the community.



Northern Water Smart Program

The Northern Water Smart® Program was conducted for one week in La Ronge in 2024. This aligned with Drowning Prevention Week, further extending messaging reach and impact within the community.

Throughout the week, a variety of aquatic training opportunities were provided, including Swim for Life and Swim Patrol lessons, alongside Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross courses. Notably, this marked the second consecutive year of full Swim for Life lessons in La Ronge, with four candidates successfully completing their Bronze Medallion certification.

A sincere thank-you goes to Lara Mutimer and Anna Bolen for their outstanding dedication as instructors this summer. Their expertise and commitment, alongside Branch staff member Logan Gamble, contributed significantly to the delivery of high-quality aquatic programming in La Ronge.

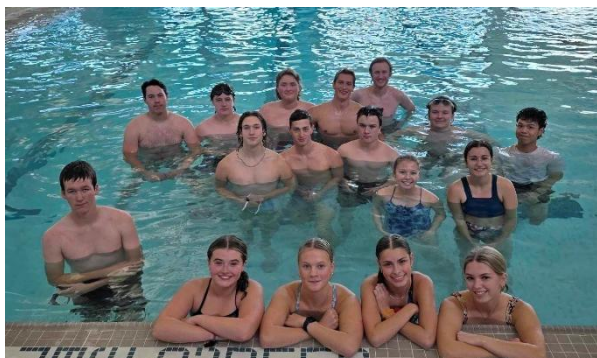


Connection and Support for Affiliates

Lifesaving Society Affiliates are an integral part of preventing drowning and water-related injury. Through our third-party delivery system, Affiliates offer our programs including our swimming lessons, Bronze level water rescue training, National Lifeguard training and Instructor training.

The Branch is committed to providing ongoing support and staying to connect to our Affiliates, including offering networking and professional development opportunities. Here are some examples of how we did that last year:

- Reviewed and consulted on ten Aquatic Safety Plans
- 19 in-person visits and/or program support meetings with Affiliates (Davidson, Kenaston, Rosthern, Pike Lake, Prince Albert Kinsmen, Moosomin, Rocanville (at Recreation Office to discuss new pool), Whitewood, Grenfell, Melfort, Nipawin, Tisdale, Porcupine Plain, U of S Aquatics, City of Regina, City of Saskatoon, City of Moose Jaw, City of Weyburn, Bengough, Radisson, Allan, Young, YMCA and Martensville)
- Virtual Affiliates Meetings: We hosted virtual group meetings with various municipal and recreation departments, boards, etc. regarding pool operations, policies, procedures, etc.
 - Virtual Year-Round Affiliate Meetings – February 15
 - Virtual Seasonal Affiliate Meetings: February 27, February, and March 5th, March 25
- Hosted Provincial Aquatic Conference and Affiliate Gathering in Prince Albert, SK – April 19 & 20
- In-person mentorship by Branch Staff for various Instructor levels in Weyburn, Kindersley, Melfort, North Battleford and at the U of S.
- Custom Inservices delivered by Branch Staff and Volunteers: Porcupine Plain, Melfort, Eston, U of S Aquatics, City of Saskatoon.
- Hosted 8 focus group sessions with lifeguards, instructors, and Trainers from January to April for Recruitment and Retention Focus Group Project





Lifesaving Sport

The Branch delivered two Lifesaving Sport Coaching Clinics in 2024. The City of Swift Current and the City of Regina each had 10 candidates in each of the two days clinics. The newly trained coaches also were able to host a two-hour public lifesaving sport clinic to try out there new coaching skills and introduce the public to the program.



2024 Financial Highlights
Auditor: Dudley & Company LLP Chartered Professional Accountants

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

ASSETS	2024	2023
Cash	360,974	\$209,239
Term Deposits	20,468	104,550
Accounts Receivable	89,174	72,395
Inventory	44,248	17,844
Interest Receivable	2,084	1,967
Prepaid expenses	3,109	3,165
TOTAL ASSETS	615,027	\$505,035
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	28,926	\$46,189
Provincial sales tax payable	1,945	6,332
GST Payable	4,870	730
Wages Payable	14,847	11,500
Deferred Income	16,500	
Total Liabilities	67,088	64,741
Net Assets		
General Fund	458,865	383,514
Restricted Fund	89,074	56,780
	547,939	440,294
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	615,027	\$505,035

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

REVENUES	2024	2024
Sask Lotteries Trust Fund	97,326	\$94,860
Training Revenue	7,573	1,867
Affiliation and Service revenue	26,938	27,830
Training Programs	102,062	91,647
Examination Fees	128,311	115,004
Public Education revenue	6,961	13,143
Literature and recognition material	217,620	200,846
Fundraising and Donations	4,081	682
Branch Program	10,985	5,363
Shipping and Handling	8,175	5,799
AGM revenue	3,216	-
Interest	6,797	6,088
Commissions	6,101	3,618
TOTAL REVENUE	626,146	\$566,745

Expenses		
Freight in and Duty	1,036	-
Purchases	70,034	115,895
Insurance and licenses	6,791	6,040
Training	28,520	15,964
Northern Water Smart education	5,252	4,952
Advertising and Promotion	11,002	4,907
Amortization	6,133	5,801
Bad Debts	5,014	407
Business taxes, licenses and memberships	110	85
Travel Expenses	5,398	6,206
Board Meetings	1,870	789
Employee Benefits	28,473	28,723
Interest and Bank Charges	7,575	5,403
Office	11,285	20,283
Computer and IT expenses	2,604	4,581
Program Costs	4,623	3,347
National Levy	24,590	28,325
Public Education	9,223	9,487
Audit Fees	9,223	9,487
Bookkeeping Fees	6,619	6,200
Property Taxes	6,100	5,990
Repairs and Maintenance	1,341	2,425
Salaries and Wages	262,752	249,629
Telephone	3,852	4,232
Utilities	4,264	4,759
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$518,501	\$536,383
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$107,645	\$30,364

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

