

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal 2025 Recipient Biographies

Craig Bird, C.D. — Estevan, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Craig Bird has devoted more than two decades to preserving military history and supporting veterans across southeast Saskatchewan. A longtime member of the Royal Canadian Legion, he assists with ceremonies, local history projects, and educational presentations. In 2019, he founded the Southeast Military Museum, where he researches service members, restores cenotaph records and produces community history books. Craig also volunteers as Commanding Officer of the Estevan Army Cadets and contributes to the Estevan Wildlife Federation, Prairie Mentoring Centre, and Last Post Fund.

Janice Cochrane — Yorkton, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Janice Cochrane has dedicated decades to volunteer service that strengthens Saskatchewan communities. A passionate advocate for diabetes care, she founded the Humboldt branch of the Canadian Diabetes Association and went on to serve in numerous provincial and national volunteer leadership roles, including Chair of the National Diabetes Educators Section. She has supported diabetes camps, created family programs for Indigenous children, and contributed to national committees improving health resources. Beyond diabetes, Janice has volunteered with community fundraising groups, long-term care homes, and youth programs. Her lifelong commitment reflects a deep belief in service, compassion, and community well-being.

Vernon Glaicar — Bangor, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Vernon Glaicar has devoted more than four decades to serving his community through exceptional volunteer leadership. Since 1983, he has served as Councillor for the RM of Saltcoats, contributing to key bylaws, infrastructure planning, and long-term community development. As Chairperson of Morris Lodge for 15 years, he dedicated countless volunteer hours to fundraising, maintenance, and hands-on support, ensuring seniors received quality care despite limited resources. For over 30 years, he has led the Waldron Recreation Board, organizing community events, sports programs, and youth activities. His additional volunteer roles across agricultural, recreational, and youth organizations reflect a lifelong commitment to strengthening rural Saskatchewan.

Randy Goulden — Yorkton, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Randy Goulden is a lifelong community builder whose volunteer leadership has strengthened organizations across Yorkton, Saskatchewan, and Canada, as well as internationally. She has served in extensive roles, including Director of the Yorkton Mental Health Centre, Chair of the Yorkton Active Living Committee, President of both the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association and the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, and Board Trustee for the Community Initiatives Fund. Randy was the Chair for the Royal Visit to Yorkton and area for Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal. As Chair of the Society for the Involvement of Good Neighbours and organizer of major community events, she has consistently advanced community wellbeing. Her decades of volunteer dedication reflect a deep commitment to fostering healthy, vibrant, and inclusive communities provincewide.

Cecile Halyk — Foam Lake, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Cecile Halyk, a mother of six, has spent almost 59 years enriching the Foam Lake community through exceptional volunteer service. A dedicated leader in her parish, she has contributed to the music ministry, catechetics, and faith formation, and is a longtime visitor of those who are sick or unable to leave their homes. She has led with piano and song in the Jubilee Home in Foam Lake for over 50 years. Cecile has held every executive role in the Catholic Women's League, organizing countless fundraisers that support charitable work locally and beyond. She has volunteered with groups such as Royal Purple, Horticultural Society and Community Hall Fundraising Committee. Cecile is one of the 10 Foam Lake women known as

the Breast Friends who raised almost two million dollars for cancer-related causes. Her quiet generosity, hospitality, and hands-on service have uplifted thousands across Saskatchewan.

James Hawn — Saskatoon, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

For more than 50 years, James Hawn has been a cornerstone of Saskatchewan’s choral and performing arts community through extensive volunteer leadership. He has served in volunteer roles across numerous arts organizations, including the Saskatchewan Choral Federation—where he was Board President—along with Persephone Theatre, TCU Place, Friends of the Broadway Theatre, Skills Canada, SaskCulture, and Choral Canada. As Artistic Director of the Saskatoon Chamber Singers and a longtime mentor to emerging musicians, he has supported countless artists and strengthened cultural life across the province. He has also spent considerable time directing for the Saskatoon Gateway Players and Saskatoon Summer Players. His commitment to service, mentorship, and community building defines his enduring volunteer legacy.

Captain (Ret’d) John Helms, C.D. — Saskatoon, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Captain (Ret’d) John Helms, C.D., has devoted decades of volunteer service to supporting Veterans and preserving Saskatchewan’s military heritage after serving 39 years in the Canadian Army Reserve (Logistics Branch). He spent more than 14 years volunteering with the Canadian Corps of Commissionaires, where his leadership and financial expertise helped professionalize operations, expand services and improve employment opportunities for Veterans. He has also been instrumental in strengthening financial oversight and reporting of the North Saskatchewan Regiment Fund Inc. and advancing local military history initiatives. As a 23-year volunteer with the Last Post Fund, he leads Saskatchewan’s Unmarked Grave Program, co-ordinating researchers and personally documenting hundreds of Veterans’ graves to ensure they are commemorated with a military marker.

Karen Howard — Regina, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Karen Howard has dedicated decades of volunteer service to developing figure skating in Saskatchewan and across Canada, and just recently returned from the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milano-Cortina. As an International Judge, she mentors skaters at every level—from beginners to international competitors—and

provides ongoing support by monitoring programs, evaluating elements, and guiding coaches. She is equally committed to strengthening the officiating community, frequently moderating clinics, delivering update seminars, and mentoring new judges. Known for her professionalism and generosity, she makes herself available after every competition to answer questions from skaters, coaches, and officials. Her steadfast volunteer efforts and global-level expertise have made her an invaluable ambassador for her sport and the province.

Linda Hryniuk — La Ronge, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Linda Hryniuk has been a devoted volunteer in La Ronge for over 30 years, generously contributing her time, financial expertise, and unwavering energy to numerous community organizations. A retired accountant, she serves on multiple boards—including the La Ronge Senior Citizens Club, Food Bank, a local church, Napatak Ramble music festival, and the Curling Club, primarily as treasurer — where she manages budgets, supports fundraising, and keeps immaculate financial records. Beyond board work, Linda volunteers at community events, from timing the Saskaloppet to helping at music festivals, hockey games and senior bingos, and raising funds for the new long-term 80-bed care facility — always stepping in wherever needed. Her mentorship, tireless work ethic, and deep commitment make her an inspiring pillar of the community.

Honorary Colonel Curtis Kimpton — Saskatoon, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Strengthening Saskatchewan through wide-ranging, high-impact volunteer leadership has been Curtis Kimpton’s goal for nearly 30 years. He helped transform small community initiatives into major institutions, including the Cystic Fibrosis Walk, the Enchanted Forest, the Portraits of Honour national tour, and the Saskatoon Community Foundation’s Community Fund for Reconciliation. A dedicated supporter of military members, he served on the Saskatoon Vimy Dinner Committee and later became Honorary Colonel of 38 Service Battalion, advocating for reservists and helping expand community–military partnerships. Through extensive service with Kin Canada, the Saskatoon Zoo Foundation, and numerous civic and charitable organizations, Curtis has consistently modelled humility, vision, and a deep commitment to community well-being.

Carol Marwick — Regina, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Carol Marwick is an exceptionally dedicated volunteer whose enthusiasm and reliability have made her a familiar and trusted presence at major events across Regina. She has contributed countless hours to the Queen City Marathon, Flatlanders Road Race, Regina Beach Trail Race, Agribition, Canada’s Farm Show, Skate Canada events, the Rider Squad, the Salvation Army, the Grey Cup, and the Brier, often taking on leadership roles and supporting other volunteers. Carol also serves the Regina Symphony Orchestra and REAL community programs, including initiatives for newcomers and sensory-friendly youth events. Known for her positivity, initiative, and unfailing willingness to help, she exemplifies the true spirit of volunteerism.

Gerry Nelson — Meadow Lake, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Gerry Nelson has dedicated more than 35 years to advancing blind golf locally, nationally, and internationally. Blind himself, he has volunteered as a leader, mentor, co-ordinator, and advocate, helping grow the sport and support blind and visually impaired golfers of all ages. He organized major events—including the first Canadian Open Blind golf championships in Saskatoon in 1997—and has served in key roles such as Saskatchewan Blind Golf Co-ordinator, Chair of the Western Canadian Blind Golf Association, President of Blind Golf Canada, and Canada’s representative to International Blind Golf. Through coaching, promoting participation, and supporting new players worldwide, Gerry’s impact on the sport is profound and enduring.

Rosemary Overbye — Lake Alma, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Rosemary Overbye has spent more than 30 years serving her rural community as a dedicated Medical First Responder, answering 911 calls at all hours and providing critical care long before an ambulance can arrive. She mentors fellow responders, recruits new volunteers, organizes training, and now works toward Red Cross instructor certification. Beyond emergency response, Rose contributes tirelessly to local schools, recreation boards, community events, and fundraisers—often cooking meals, supporting children and seniors, and offering comfort after difficult emergencies. Known for her compassion, reliability, and unwavering service, she embodies the spirit of community care and rural resilience.

Dr. Renatta Varma — Regina, SK

Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal Recipient – 2025

Dr. Renatta Varma has dedicated decades to volunteer service that spans cultural, civic, artistic, and humanitarian sectors across Saskatchewan. A longtime CNIB board member and former Chair, she led the Guide Dogs with Purpose Gala, raising more than \$600,000 to fund six guide dogs and support tens of thousands of people with vision loss. Her volunteer leadership extends to the Regina International Film Festival, Cultural Connections Regina, the RCMP Heritage Centre, the Hindu Samaj of Southern Saskatchewan, and youth athletics boards. She also contributes hands on support, fundraising, governance, and personal financial gifts. She is a previous recipient of the YWCA Women of Distinction Award, the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal, and the King Charles III Coronation Medal and has been recently appointed an Honorary Lieutenant Colonel of the 10th Field Artillery Regiment, RCA. Her service embodies generosity, inclusion, and the Saskatchewan spirit.