



You can help make a difference in the lives of thousands in Central Alberta

Red Deer, Alberta – Tuesday, December 17, 2013 – As of today, \$1,952,530 or 87% of the goal has been achieved. Volunteers and staff are hopeful that there are still those in our community who can help donate another \$300,000 to help with the increased demands on programs and services. Donations can be made online through credit card on a monthly, quarterly or one-time basis. United Way would also like to remind everyone of the impact they can have on the lives of many. Linda Shepherd is one of those who has received help and can never express her gratitude enough for the support.

Linda always hated sports as a child because her feet and legs hurt all the time. After visiting numerous specialists, she was told that she had rheumatoid arthritis, an auto-immune disease that leads to the inflammation of joints and surrounding tissues. At the age of 11, Linda was not prepared to face what would be many hospital visits. At the age of 21, Linda had her hip replaced and spent 9 months in the hospital, which was 4 hours away from her family. Eventually, after one traumatic surgery Linda decided to emigrate to Stettler, from Northern England, to be with her sister. After finding that Canadian climate helped with the pain of rheumatoid arthritis, Linda officially became a Canadian resident in 1977. "I've had more surgeries, broken bones and infections than I care to count. Life hasn't been easy but I've met some wonderful people along the way. Life can be a challenge when disabled and without family," says Linda. "However, thanks to United Way of Central Alberta and the support of the community, I am able to remain independent in my own home and be an active volunteer in my community."

"There are thousands of our colleagues, neighbours and friends who depend on services each and every day. Stories like Linda's help remind us why it is so important to contribute financially when we can. After my heart attack, I understand how your life can change in an instant. While I am doing very well now, I am even more sensitive to those who may not have the supports in place when a major life event happens. Now is the time to decide if you can help out the people who live in your community who really need your help," said Buck Buchanan, 2013 Volunteer Campaign Co-Chair.

To make a donation visit www.caunitedway.ca or call 403.343.3900, or mail your donation to United Way Central Alberta 4811 48 Street, Red Deer, AB T4N 1S6.

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