

Non-profit organization is run solely by volunteers

## Helping Hands for Manitobans with Breast Cancer

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**D**id you know there is a non-profit organization within Manitoba that provides assistance to women and men who are experiencing financial difficulties while undergoing treatment and followup for breast cancer?

Forty per cent of funding provided by Helping Hands for Manitobans with Breast Cancer (founded in 2005) has gone to rural citizens, says charity past president, Rachel Parkinson of Winnipeg.

"I have heard social workers say that a lot of rural women

choose not to go through treatment as they can't afford to be away from their farm and their families," said Parkinson, whose husband Eldon, grew up in a rural community. "We can give them a choice!"

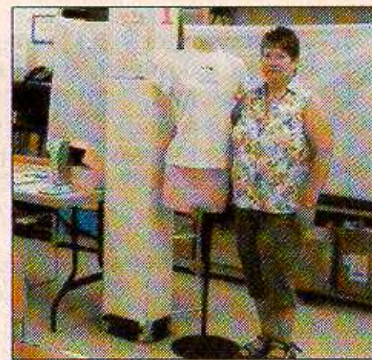
Parkinson became involved in the charity solely run by volunteers in 2006 because breast cancer runs in her family. Her mother and grandmother (father's mother) both died as a result of it.

What is most heartwarming about leading a dedicated group of volunteers in a great cause?

"I think the most satisfying feeling is knowing that we are enabling Manitobans with

breast cancer to obtain the items not covered by the health-care system or insurance while they are trying to cope with their journey. Several Manitobans who have applied indicated if we couldn't help with financial assistance that they would be unable to afford their prescriptions. How sad is that?"

In order to be able to provide that assistance, the organization conducts fundraising events and initiatives, as no grants are received nor is the charity associated with CancerCare. Events such as the Women's Run and Walk held each summer in Winnipeg's Assiniboine Park (which draws up to 1,000 partic-



COURTESY PHOTO

**RAISING FUNDS:** Rachel Parkinson shows one of the T-shirts being sold.

ipants) is put on by volunteers and they welcome new recruits. Parkinson said the event's

focus is on celebrating being a woman, and with the support and money raised, the charity can provide a helping hand to more Manitobans in need.

Funds generated through this channel and others are used to pay for non-insured breast cancer expenses such as prescriptions, travel, accommodations, meals, child care, special garments and rehabilitation services.

For more information on Helping Hands for Manitobans with Breast Cancer go to the organization's website [www.helpinghands4mb.wbc.com](http://www.helpinghands4mb.wbc.com).

— Darrell Nesbitt writes from Shoal Lake, Manitoba