

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**August 7, 2018**

# **Legendary Tennis Fundraiser Rallies Strong for 17<sup>th</sup> and Final Year**

KELOWNA, BC – It's the end of an era for tennis enthusiasts from across B.C. Organizers of the legendary, KGH Foundation Classic Celebrity Tennis and Bocce Tournament by the Lake recently announced that this year's event, Sept 14 & 15, would be its swan song, completing an era of extraordinary fundraising in service of the Kelowna General Hospital's cardiac program.

Since 2002, the event has raised over \$795,000. Over sixteen years, all proceeds from the friendly, competitive tournament have been donated to fund the acquisition a wide variety of specialized cardiac equipment. This includes diagnostic cardiographs, digital echo machines, pediatric cardiac/respiratory monitors, defibrillators, sonosite ultrasounds, holter monitors and so much more. For the past four years, tournament organizers have teamed up with the Central Okanagan Association for Cardiac Health (COACH), supporting cardiac rehabilitation and maintenance programs in our community.

Every year, the event has been hosted by Walley Lightbody and his wife, Marietta, who passed away peacefully in July 2016 after a courageous battle with cancer. They are both well known in Kelowna for their effervescent spirit and commitment to philanthropy and have poured their heart and soul into this incredible fundraiser for many years.

Over the years, the original idea to gather a few friends, play some tennis and 'raise a few bucks for KGH', quickly grew to something much more. Fast forward sixteen years later, and Walley and his friends have welcomed over 200 guests to Friday night's opening ceremonies and hosted countless tennis and bocce enthusiasts to battle it out during Saturday play.

The action gets underway at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 14th with top level competition. The Opening Ceremonies kick off at 6:00pm and include performances by the Kelowna Pipe Band, Jazz Vocalist Kinga Heming and Opera Star Alexandra Babel. Friday night's events also include a silent auction, raffle, beer, wine and hors d'oeuvres. Saturday is game day! All tennis matches will be taking place at the Okanagan Mission Tennis Club, which graciously provides their courts to us for the day. The Bocce Ball tournament is fun for anyone wanting to try something other than Tennis, and will take place at Walley's - 'on the Grass by the Lake' - Saturday at noon.

To celebrate the events success and legacy, the committee is inviting past players, friends and family who have been involved in the tournament throughout the years to join them in a special celebration of all that has been achieved on Saturday, Sept 15 at the Coast Capri Hotel. Saturday evening will feature live musical entertainment, banquet dinner, silent auction & raffle prizes, awards ceremony and a special tribute to this year's honourees and to all those who have participated and supported the event.

For more information, to register for the tennis or bocce tournament and to purchase tickets to Saturday's Wrap-Up Celebrations, please go to [www.kghfoundation.com](http://www.kghfoundation.com).

*The KGH Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization committed to enhancing the delivery of healthcare to the patients of Kelowna General Hospital and its associated facilities.*

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