

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. About the Ryan/Dubé Equine Performance Centre expansion

- The expansion will more than triple the size of the existing equine performance centre, adding nearly 1,000 sq m (10,600 sq. ft.) to the original building that was opened in 1998. Located just north of the WCVM, the expanded centre's indoor longeing arena and paved runway will allow clinical teams to conduct a full evaluation of a lame horse in motion. Clinicians will be able to observe a horse's gait on soft and hard surfaces, and when it's under saddle, on a longe line or moving at liberty.
- The centre will also be used to diagnose and treat other equine health issues such as respiratory disease, cardiac disorders, gastric conditions and behavioural problems.
- The centre's resources will complement the WCVM Veterinary Teaching Hospital's existing diagnostic tools that include digital radiography, endoscopy, ultrasonography, computed tomography (CT) and nuclear scintigraphy.
- Besides clinical activities, the expanded building will be a centre for:
 - **Training and continuing education:** Faculty and staff will use the facilities to conduct teaching demonstrations and labs focused on horse handling, equine medical procedures and lameness diagnoses for veterinary students, graduate students and practicing veterinarians in Western Canada.
 - **Research:** Equine researchers will have a place to investigate important health questions related to lameness (hoof and limb) issues, respiratory problems, cardiology, sports medicine, infectious diseases, gastric conditions, behaviour and more.
 - **Extension:** The WCVM will have the resources to host equine health demonstrations, seminars and other events that are designed for western Canadian horse owners.

2. About Heather Ryan and L. David Dubé

- Heather Ryan and her husband, L. David Dubé, have supported animal health research and veterinary education programs at the WCVM for more than a decade. Their latest gift of \$1.2 million that will be used toward the equine performance centre's expansion is the first time they have contributed to an infrastructure project at the veterinary college.
- The Saskatoon couple contributed \$1.07 million to the veterinary college's equine and companion animal health programs in 2006. Part of their original contribution (\$750,000) went toward establishing an equine research fund that supports major, collaborative research projects targeting critical issues in horse health. Multi-disciplinary research investigations of equine endotoxemia, neonatal *Rhodococcus equi* pneumonia and genetic ocular disorders in horses were among the first projects to receive support from this fund.

- As part of the 2006 contribution, the WCVM's Equine Health Research Fund and Companion Animal Health Fund also received \$125,000 each for their research programs. Another \$70,000 was used to establish two annual scholarships (worth \$7,200 each) for senior veterinary students who have demonstrated an interest in equine or companion animal health care. The "Dino and Dr. Ashburner Award in Equine Care" and the "Buddy and Dr. Snead Award in Small Animal Care" are presented during the WCVM's annual graduation awards program.

- In addition, Ryan and Dubé established a matching gift incentive program and pledged to match any new money contributed to the fund that they created for large-scale equine health projects or any increased amounts in contributions to the Equine Health Research Fund over a five-year period (2006-2011). So far, the program has helped to raise nearly \$450,000 for equine health research at the WCVM.

- The WCVM Veterinary Teaching Hospital has cared for horses owned by Ryan and Dubé for more than 15 years. Their herd includes *Vandi Solis*, a 33-year-old registered quarter horse mare that is the great granddaughter of *Wimpy*, the first horse registered in the American Quarter Horse Association's studbook. Vandi had a successful career in working cow horse (reined cow horse) competitions and is the mother of four foals.

- Ryan's other original horse, *Docs Bueno Bar (Dino)*, died in 2006 at the age of 31. To honour Dino's memory and the care that he received from a WCVM veterinarian, the "Dino and Dr. (Sue) Ashburner Award in Equine Care" award is annually presented to a graduating WCVM veterinary student who has been an advocate for his/her equine patients during the fourth-year clinical rotations.

- Ryan, who has been involved in the sport of polo since 1998, owns and trains a string of polo ponies for competition in Western Canada and southern California. Virtually all of her polo mounts are reschooled thoroughbred horses that used to race at Saskatoon's Marquis Downs before beginning a second career on the polo field.

- In August 2010, Ryan and Dubé organized the inaugural "Polo for the Ponies" polo match and fundraising event that was held near Saskatoon, Sask. Donations from riders and guests raised \$3,490 in support of equine health research, and through their matching gift incentive program, Ryan and Dubé increased the total to nearly \$7,000. The couple plans to organize the second "Polo for the Ponies" during the summer of 2011.