

Crystal Krost

Bubbly, upbeat, cheerful, and energetic. These were the words that Julia McKay used to describe one member of The Pas Rotary Club. Crystal Krost has made a strong first and lasting impression with the Rotarians, the Kinettes and others that have the good fortune to work with her. She is a community minded citizen who goes about her day full of good nature, a kind heart, and an incredible amount of energy sprinkling it about in her home, work, and volunteer life. How did she become so involved in community, and how does she juggle all her responsibilities? Crystal's story is about community responsibility and creating what you want in the community, enjoying the process, all while maintaining a positive frame of mind.

Crystal's journey started when she was born in the 80's, living most of her life in The Pas, with a brief time out of community attending school in Winnipeg and Selkirk. She was raised by her mother, Janice Morrish, and grandfather. Even though Crystal did not have her father to influence her in childhood years, she felt truly fortunate, as she had the loving, consistent support, and guidance from three special people in addition to her mother, she had her grandfather, Clarence Morrish, and her uncle & auntie, Gary & Flo Morrish. She felt fortunate that both of these men were there to provide support and act as male role models. From the early age of 5 years, Crystal learned how to be a good citizen, tagging along with her grandfather Clarence to deliver Meals on Wheels. Everyone on their delivery route loved to talk to them and were happy to see them. Her grandfather holds a special place in her heart, as he lived with Crystal and her mother, providing an upstanding male role model for her and her brother. Her grandfather believed that everyone needs to give something back to community. He was an active member and supporter within many volunteer groups and fraternities in The Pas. Clarence supported the work of the Shriners, The Pas Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce and Meals on Wheels. He was the first recipient and very deserving to receive the Citizen of the Year award in 1994 issued by The Chamber of Commerce. Although, her grandfather has passed on, he has left wonderful memories of past cribbage games, ice fishing trips, conversations and special times spent together. She loved going to Clearwater lake to spend time with her aunt, uncle and cousins, Gary & Florence Morrish. There was always lots of fun family functions, my aunt and uncle always including us in the fun. Florence and Gary were like a "second set of parents." Crystal felt the love and support from her extended family. In her words her childhood was awesome. The family unit looked after each other. They also were there to help neighbors and others in need. Crystal was brought up within this environment, understanding the value of helping family, neighbors, and community. She watched both her grandfather and her uncle get actively involved in creating the community that they wanted to live in.

As a young girl, Crystal volunteered at the Bill Bannock fishing derby with her uncle and her grandfather. She would fill a sleigh full of pop, hamburgers, and other hot selling items, selling to all who needed to refuel on the ice. She never saw it as work. It was always fun. As she got older, she tried to join in things that gave her the opportunity to give back. Her value and belief system had been set by her family and extended family.

After she furthered her post-secondary education, she started to explore ways to get involved. There was no shortage of areas to volunteer. She approached the Northern Manitoba Trappers Festival, totally immersing herself for 8 years as a Trappers Board member. She was frequently nominated to speak with the media as she is comfortable with public speaking. She indicated to me that her teachers

boasted on her report cards of her ability to talk... she talks a lot. Crystal has made many friends through her joy of speaking including those working at the local CJAR 1240 radio station. It was here that she met a man that she would fall in love with and marry. One of her good friends was leaving the radio station, telling her that the new person coming in would need to be introduced to the community. This was the start of a new life for Crystal, as she was introduced to Jordan Krost, the person who she would share her life with, create their family and continue the family tradition of giving back by practicing some of the same things that her grandfather and uncle had done with her as a child. Teaching their young family to give back to the community.

After less than a year of being friends, Crystal and Jordan stepped up the relationship to dating. Crystal had a fairy tale engagement story happening out of her involvement with the NMTF opening ceremonies, coinciding one day after Valentines Day! She was told to keep things on a strict schedule as the dignitaries attending that year, included Premier Brian Pallister. They did not want to go into overtime. Jordan took the microphone, and setup a story of how Crystal did not like to be called his girlfriend. It was at that moment that he dropped to one knee and proposed in front of the entire NMTF opening ceremonies group of dignitaries, officials, volunteers, and festival participants. It really was a special afternoon. Crystal did not have to think twice, she accepted the proposal and has been happily married for three and a half years. Everyone was emotional including the Premier. He approached Crystal and Jordan to congratulate them and told them that this proposal brought tears to his eyes. This was also the first year that the NMTF streamed live. The community was a part of her engagement proposal. Crystal was surprised, delighted and ready to get married, which happened the that same summer. She stepped down from the Trappers Board knowing that she was pregnant with her second child and had plans for a second term on council. Family is important to Crystal and she knew that she could not keep up to the work required for the NMTF position and put her attention towards her family. Her second baby was born on January 31st just 2 weeks before opening ceremonies for the NMTF.

In 2012, Crystal joined the The Pas Rotary Club. Many Morrish family members have been involved in this organization. It seemed like the family thing to do. In her younger life, Crystal experienced the rotary lunch meetings, and participated in many of their fundraising events as a volunteer. Her cousin Brent, uncle Gary and Grandpa Clarence were all involved in the work of the Rotarians. "At an event that I was volunteering at, the Rotarian President at the time asked me if I would like to join the club and invited me to a meeting". Crystal attended three meetings and then made the informed decision to join the club. She has been involved in chairing the lobster dinner a few times, volunteered with the District Convention and helps with any draws and fundraisers she can. Every Rotarian plays a part. Once she was involved, she took her turn in helping to make the community a better place to live. It seemed fitting for her to join. Her husband Jordan also made the commitment to join The Pas The Pas Rotary Club and they both received the Paul Harris Fellowship award in 2019 for their efforts. It is one of their family together things to do. There are currently only seven female Rotarian members. Crystal is encouraging other women to get involved with local service groups. To find out how you can get involved reach out to Crystal, Jordan or any of the Rotarians.

You would think that being involved in one service group would be enough, however, the energy that Crystal emits is tremendous. She is one of many active members of The Pas Kinettes as well. The Kinettes work to serve the communities greatest needs. Recently the Kinettes made a substantial donation to the Opasquia Trails "build the boardwalk" project. Val Uffelman, a Kinettes member

received \$2500.00 from the “Possibilities” project which she designated toward the Opasquia Trails project. The Kinettes matched the donation. The Kinettes have supported past projects such as the spray park and the skate park. They are currently promoting the Kin Canada Bursary to assist students attending their first year of trade school or a final year of Ph.D. Eligible students who qualify can receive a \$1000.00 bursary which must be submitted by February 1, 2021. The Kinettes are doing great things for our community. Crystal is proud to be a member supporting the work of this group.

Crystal spends her home time teaching and raising her two little joys; Florence Grace, named after her auntie Florence and Grandmother Grace. Her second child Haley was named after herself, just because Crystal liked the name. Both children are full of life, running and playing together in their new home. As a family they bake together, color and paint together, read together, play boardgames and cards together. Both children love to dance and sing. Together with her husband Jordan, they take their children to sell tickets and deliver Meals on Wheels. They want to pass on the tradition to their children to ensure that community stays strong. They have taught their children that they do not have to do it, but their children want to get involved. The powerful effect that Crystal’s grandfather and her mother had on her as a child, stays with her and she is passing it on to her children. She remembers her mother taking her by the hand and doing these types of things with her. She wants her girls to experience giving back to community as well.

Crystal’s love for community-based work is evident. She has worked in several capacities within the community, taking on the responsibilities of many positions with The Pas Action Center, Aurora House, The Pas Renewal Corporation, and Beatrice Wilson. She has been involved in recreation planning, community program planning, counselling children, teaching pre-school and at one time performing the tasks of Executive Director of the Action Center. In her work with The Pas Renewal Corporation, Crystal organized Canada Day celebrations, allocating small grants to fund community projects, brain stormed and brought to life the” Zombie Walk” in association with CJAR radio, as well as brought the Santa Claus Parade to the tri community. She is currently working with the Beatrice Wilson Health Center as one of the team members currently assisting with rolling out the COVID-19 vaccination program. She was hired into the Quality & Safety Coordinator with BW, currently playing her part in the pandemic response team. She is hands on and truly feels her best when her boots are on the ground and her hands are in action allowing for programs and projects to happen. She is a master organizer.

There are many demands as a Town of The Pas Council member. Crystal wanted the experience and ran for a town counsellor position in 2014. She was elected, representing the town citizens for the following four years. Between 2014 and 2018 there were a lot of ups and downs and difficult times. As you may recall, the paper mill announced closure, the water receiving well needed upgrades, the fire department experienced a major issue, and the water treatment plant required an above ground pumping system. A lot of tough decisions had to be made in those four years. We (the council) wanted to make the right decisions. We could not please everyone, but we did our best and acted out of good faith. We worked well together as a council in spite of our diverse backgrounds. Everyone brought something different to the table, but for the most part, councilors worked out their different ideas and opinions. It was during this time, that the LaRose Ave infrastructure was rebuilt without an added cost to taxpayers. The spray park was finally approved while she was on council. So many families and other people were involved in making this project happen. Fundraising, selling cookies and hot dogs brought the spray park project to the community. Crystal played a part in creating awareness to the importance of barrier free activities for children and families. She is proud of the town councils’ accomplishments during those four years.

Although she ran again; she would be defeated by a few votes. Although she was saddened by the news, she now sees this as a blessing in disguise. She believes that there is a reason for everything. She can fully devote her extra time to her two beautiful children, continue to serve in her volunteer work, and focus on her position with Beatrice Wilson. Recently she and her husband purchased a home on LaRose, right across from the home that she grew up in, bringing back all of the memories of her childhood, with hopes of creating those good feel and safe childhood memories for her daughters.

Volunteering starts when we influence our children at a young age, taking them by the hand and showing them the importance of being a part of the community. Thank you, Crystal and Jordan, for taking your children by the hand and showing them the path to a strong community through leading by example. The community is stronger because of your efforts. Thank you for sharing your story with our community. Continue to enjoy this wonderful community that you are creating.

Make Shift Happen.

Submitted by Denise Duncan