



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

City of Niagara Falls Canada Day Celebrations – Parade Grand Marshalls

Niagara Falls, ON, June 17, 2019 – With two weeks to go until Canada Day, the Niagara Falls Canada Day Planning Team are thrilled to announce names of our Parade Grand Marshalls that will be joining in the OPG Niagara Falls Canada Day Parade on Monday, July 1, 2019 at 11:00 am.

Lori Albanese, Community Development Coordinator for the City of Niagara Falls, said “the Canada Day Planning Team are thrilled and honoured to announce that Niagara Falls six year old cancer survivor Reed Wales and Niagara philanthropist Tom Rankin have been selected as our Parade Grand Marshalls for this year’s OPG Niagara Falls Canada Day Parade”.

Reed Wales:

On April 13, 2015, Reed was diagnosed with High Risk Early T-Cell Precursor Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia exactly two months shy of his second birthday. Life changes quickly. Reed went to daycare in the morning and Reed’s parents, Brett & Lucy, were faced with a Leukemia diagnosis that evening. What followed was 108 weeks of treatment including cranial radiation, chemotherapy, and numerous operations.

Brett’s father says that “Children are so much more resilient than we give them credit for”. Brett & Lucy thought that they would get Reed through his diagnosis and treatment. In the end, Brett says that he believes Reed pulled THEM through. During the treatment, it became evident that the cancer was almost easier to battle than the side effects of the chemotherapy as Reed fought pneumonia, fungal infections, MRSA, C.Diff, two broken bones, and numerous hospital admissions. Reed received his last dose of chemotherapy in May 2017. He will be completing kindergarten this year and entering grade 1 in September. Reed is very active and healthy. Hospital visits are down to every three months and Reed has entered a new phase of follow up where the focus is on the long term effects of chemotherapy on children.

Reed’s parents know they have been blessed with Reed, and enjoy every day. Throughout it all, they have experienced the good in people, including many who have chosen to be anonymous. Reed and his family thank everyone for the support, and for supporting local causes that help families like theirs.

Tom Rankin:

Niagara resident Tom Rankin has made a huge impact in our community with his care and commitment, loyalty and investment in humanitarian needs and causes. His company, Rankin Construction, has made significant contributions to the Niagara Health System, Hospice Niagara, Goodwill Niagara, Jericho House, Pathstone Foundation, and Wellspring Niagara. He has also contributed to local projects such as the commemorative for the Battle of Lundy’s Lane, Brock University, and Niagara College. One of the most significant contributions is Tom Rankin’s commitment to the Rankin Cancer Run that has helped raise millions of dollars that have come right back to benefit special people like Reed Wales in the Niagara community.

A Great City ... For Generations To Come

Tom Rankin has been awarded with the T. Roy Adams Humanitarian Award, the CCA Person of the Year Award, and many other awards. Tom's leadership and commitment to the community are an inspiration to all of us!

Special Guest:

In addition to our special Parade Grande Marshalls, we are pleased to announce special guest Miss Universe Canada 2018 Marta Stepien will be joining in the OPG Niagara Falls Canada Day Parade.

Miss Universe Canada 2018 - Marta Stepien:

Marta Magdalena Stepien was awarded Miss Universe Canada in 2018 and will be handing over her crown later this year. With an 11 year international modeling career, and the title of Miss Universe Canada, Marta has worked and travelled the globe, experiencing different cultures in countries such as Poland, Japan, France, England, Germany, South Korea, Switzerland, Nicaragua, and Colombia, thus allowing her to better understand the people and world around her. She is fluent in Polish, English, as well as conversational French and German. Marta is entering her last year of biomedical engineering technology and has an interest in genetics and immunology, and has worked as an applied researcher. As Miss Universe Canada 2018, Marta utilized her title to raise awareness for date rape drug survivors, a cause immensely close to her heart. She also worked with several different charities during her reign including SOS Children's Villages Nicaragua, and Children's Miracle Network Canada. Her spare time is spent enjoying her artistic talents, gardening, and passion for fitness, and leading a healthy and active lifestyle.

Canada Day Event Schedule:

For the complete, detailed Niagara Falls Canada Day Schedule, visit niagarafalls.ca/canadaday

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For more information, contact:

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