

## **The 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Rob Lutterman - Ski for a Cure* event Grassroots fundraiser helps make innovative cancer research possible**

**Montreal, February 17, 2014** – This Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Cancer Research Society in partnership with the Lutterman Family and friends will host the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual *Rob Lutterman - Ski for a Cure* event at Mont Sutton to commemorate Rob Lutterman, husband, father, friend and avid skier, who lost his battle with pancreatic cancer in 1999. For the Cancer Research Society, this event is a shining example of how people directly affected by cancer find unique ways to join the fight against the disease. By donating their time, money and efforts to support cancer research, they are able to turn their grief over the loss of a loved one into hope for others struggling with the disease, which remains the leading cause of death in Canada.

Fran Lutterman lost her husband, Rob Lutterman, in the summer of 1999 to pancreatic cancer, when he was only 63 years old. Their two teenage children at the time, Joel and Randy, now have families of their own, grandchildren whom Rob Lutterman never got the chance to know. Rob was passionate about life, his family, his work, and skiing. This is why, in 2000, family and friends decided to do something to commemorate his life in a way that was special and unique to him, which is how the *Rob Lutterman - Ski for a Cure* event and *Memorial Fund* were born.

Mrs. Lutterman knew of the Cancer Research Society through friends, and decided to approach them with a fundraising idea: create a commemorative annual event through which Rob's family and friends could get together to celebrate his life, but also, raise money for pancreatic cancer research. Every winter since then, friends of the Luttermans, colleagues and extended family get together at Mont Sutton, a ski hill in Quebec's Eastern Townships, to ski, laugh, and remember Rob. And for the last 15 years, at 2 p.m. on the day of the event, a commemorative run down the hill takes place to honour his memory.

What started as a grassroots initiative turned into a fundraising force to be reckoned with: the *Rob Lutterman - Ski for a Cure* event has helped raise over \$1 million in funding for pancreatic cancer research. This year, the Luttermans will celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the event, and thanks to the generosity of donors who make contributions year-round to the *Rob Lutterman*

*Memorial Fund*, the Cancer Research Society hopes to award two new operating grants to the most promising pancreatic cancer research projects in Canada, totaling \$240,000.

And there's still much work to be done. Despite significant advances in the treatment of other cancers, pancreatic cancer remains, for the most part, incurable. It is often referred to as a *silent killer* because typically, no symptoms emerge until the cancer is at a very advanced stage and effective treatment options are limited. Right now, surgery offers the only chance for a cure, but only a small percentage of patients are diagnosed early enough to be eligible.

"We have been doing this for the past 15 years to celebrate Rob, and to keep raising money for research, because the need for detection and treatment options for pancreatic cancer is still staggering," states Fran Lutterman. About 4,700 Canadians are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer every year and the survival rate is dismal. Only 15-20% of those afflicted will still be alive after 12 months, and a mere 6% will survive five years after their diagnosis. "We are very grateful to the Lutterman family for their unwavering support these past 15 years, and are deeply humbled by their generosity and how they turned their grief into something really powerful in the fight against pancreatic cancer," comments Mr. Andy Chabot, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Cancer Research Society.

For more information about the *Rob Lutterman Ski for a Cure* event or to make a donation to the *Rob Lutterman Memorial Fund*, visit: [www.skiforcure.ca](http://www.skiforcure.ca).

### **About the Cancer Research Society**

The Cancer Research Society is a national not-for-profit organization whose sole mission is to fund research on all types of cancer, thereby contributing to the advancement of science aimed at preventing, detecting, and treating this disease. The Cancer Research Society is devoted to both basic research, which has resulted in several innovative discoveries, as well as environment-cancer, a field in which the Society is considered to have played a pioneering role in Canada. During the past five years, the Cancer Research Society has granted over \$ 41 million to some 283 cancer research projects across the country through diverse fundraising activities. For more information on cancer, on the Cancer Research Society or to support research, visit [www.CancerResearchSociety.ca](http://www.CancerResearchSociety.ca) or call toll-free in Canada 1 888-766-2262.

For more information, contact:

Stéfanie Roche  
Director of Marketing and Communications  
Cancer Research Society  
[sroche@src-crs.ca](mailto:sroche@src-crs.ca)  
514-861-9227, ext. 283