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## ***Ontario woman is honoured as a national champion for the Huntington Society of Canada***

(Kitchener, ON) February 7, 2014 – February is Champion of Hope Month at the [Huntington Society of Canada](http://www.huntingtonsociety.ca) (HSC). The Society is honouring Janet Trim as a donor who has committed to making a monthly donation.

It’s been 60 years, but Janet Trim still remembers how Aunt Shirley always dressed to the nines. Beautiful clothes, fabulous hair, stylish heels: she took her fashion seriously. So when she showed up at a family picnic wearing running shoes, Janet knew something was wrong. “For Shirley to be in big comfy sneakers, it just wasn’t her,” she recalls.

Janet’s instincts were right: Shirley had Huntington disease (HD), and her worsening balance had forced her into footwear that favoured stability over style. A teenager at the time, Janet was devastated to see her once-vibrant aunt deteriorate. “We really loved Shirley, and it was just so sad to see her going downhill,” she says.

Because Shirley married into the family, Janet had no risk of inheriting the fatal neurological disease. Still, that didn’t make losing Shirley any easier. Janet was determined to honour her aunt’s memory by helping others affected by HD. She made her first donation to the Huntington Society of Canada at Shirley’s funeral, kick-starting her decades-long involvement with the organization.

She began selling and delivering Amaryllis with her husband Bill. At their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, Janet asked for donations to the Society in lieu of gifts. She served as secretary of HSC’s Toronto Chapter for several years and laced up her shoes for HSC walkathons.

In 2006, Janet and Bill decided to join the Champions of Hope program, making monthly donations to the Society. Janet downplays their generosity: “It’s a small amount,” she says. “It’s not a lot of money.” While those donations may seem modest to Janet, they contribute to an essential pool of dollars that HSC can rely on to support families and fund research.

What keeps someone like Janet donating month after month, year after year? For starters, Janet remembers the help her aunt and uncle got from HSC. “The Society is doing a great job, and they certainly helped Shirley in those early days,” she says.

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Furthermore, Janet knows that breakthroughs in HD research will benefit patients with other neurological diseases as well. Having a close friend with Parkinson's, Janet understands all too well what's at stake.

The Society is closer than ever to finding a solution for Huntington disease. The rate of discovery is unprecedented. Researchers agree that every scientific breakthrough for HD will help develop treatments for other neurological disorders, like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and ALS. **So every investment in HD research has the potential to help millions of people.**

[Huntington disease](#) is a debilitating brain disorder that is fatal and incurable. About one in every 7,000 Canadians has HD and approximately one in every 5,500 is at-risk of developing the disease. Many more are touched by HD whether as a caregiver, a family member, or a friend. Huntington disease is devastating for both the body and the mind. The symptoms, which may include uncontrollable jerking movements and relentless cognitive and emotional impairment, usually present between the ages of 30 and 45, and gradually worsen over the 10-25 year course of the disease. Eventually they lead to total incapacitation and death.

The Huntington Society of Canada is a respected leader in the worldwide effort to end Huntington disease. HSC is the only national health charity dedicated to providing help and hope for families dealing with Huntington disease across Canada. The Huntington Society of Canada aspires to a world free from Huntington disease.

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