

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Hollywood theatre a welcome diversion for SickKids patients

SickKids Foundation receives a gift to open state-of-the-art movie theatre

TORONTO, ONTARIO, Tuesday, September 12, 2006 – Norman Jewison and Chantal Kreviazuk stopped by The Hospital for Sick Children today to help present a gift valued at \$1 million that will go towards the construction of a state-of-the-art movie theatre for SickKids patients and families to enjoy. Barry Avrich, filmmaker and advertising executive, along with a group of generous donors, presented SickKids Foundation with the gift and will oversee the design and construction of the current hospital auditorium space into a 250-seat dedicated movie theatre. Construction of the new theatre will begin early in the New Year, with a grand opening set for spring 2007.

“Entertainment plays a vital role in contributing to the health and overall well-being of children,” said Mike O’Mahoney, president of SickKids Foundation. “Through the generous support of Barry Avrich, his donating partners and with unanimous support from the Canadian film industry, this theatre will go a long way to help minimize the negative impact of illness and hospitalization for patients and their families.”

A welcome diversion for SickKids patients and families, **The Hollywood at SickKids** will screen movies each week including new releases from major studios and family movies from a library of films. All movies will also be broadcast into patient rooms via closed circuit television. When the theatre is not being used to show movies, it will be used to enhance the educational capabilities of the hospital through state-of-the-art broadcast and telemedicine equipment.

“Movies have provided us the opportunity to escape and there should be no boundaries to the ability to escape including a hospital bed,” said Avrich. “I am thrilled that SickKids has embraced this idea and that the studios are supporting it.”

The Hollywood at SickKids is also partnering with Sprockets Toronto International Film Festival for Children to show films during its spring festival.

"This is a fantastic new outlet for *Sprockets* programming," said Jane Schoettle, Director, Youth Education and Sprockets. "During the festival each spring, **The Hollywood at SickKids** promises to bring the best of Sprockets programming to residing patients and their families. We're delighted to bring a piece of Sprockets to the inspirational children and youth staying at SickKids."

The theatre will be run by a team comprised of SickKids staff and a volunteer-selected studio relations team.

Having spent more than two decades in movie marketing and film production, Barry Avrich conceived of the idea while walking through a hospital and observing a child watching a film on a small video player. He felt that children should not be prevented from the entire ‘GO BIG’ experience of movies.

“It wasn’t difficult bringing the idea to life once we all started hammering out the details,” Avrich added. “It is such a natural fit for all of the partners involved and everyone has been incredibly enthusiastic about lending a hand.”

The \$1-million gift is through a \$500,000 donation along with \$500,000 in-kind services. Avrich will oversee the development and construction of **The Hollywood at SickKids**. He is joined by a team of renowned designers including Joe Brennan and Daniel Greenglass of JF Brennan Design Build Inc., who will be responsible for the design and construction of the movie theatre. Chris Hansen, one of the most sought after movie theatre designers in the world, will work with JF Brennan as a design consultant.

Participating partners include:

Melissa and Barry Avrich
The Phillip and Peggy DeZwirek Family
Myrna and Jack Daniels Foundation
Debbie and Warren Kimmel
Dynamic Funds, the Goodman Family
Cineplex Odeon
JF Brennan Design Build Inc.
Rogers Video
ONE X ONE

About SickKids Foundation

In 2005, SickKids Foundation launched the largest fundraising campaign for a hospital in Canada with a target of \$500 million to be reached by 2011. SickKids Foundation was established in 1972. Its mission is to inspire its communities to invest in health and scientific advances to improve the lives of children and their families in Canada and around the world. Its vision is “Healthier children. A better world.”

In addition to its support of The Hospital for Sick Children, the Foundation has a mandate to support children’s health on a national basis. Through its National Grants Program, SickKids Foundation invests \$4 million annually across Canada in paediatric research, focusing on issues important to children’s health which have not been addressed elsewhere.

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