



## **SASKATCHEWAN VOLUNTEER RECOGNIZED BY RBC INSURANCE, HOCKEY CANADA & HOCKEY HALL OF FAME**

**“RBC Local Hockey Leader” awarded \$10,000 for hockey in Gray, Saskatchewan**

**TORONTO, March 1, 2007** — Johnny Ford of Gray, Sask., who has volunteered at his local rink for more than 70 years, will earn special recognition in the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.

Ford is this year’s RBC Local Hockey Leader for Saskatchewan, one of 13 volunteers (one for each Hockey Canada branch) recognized today by RBC Insurance, with support from Hockey Canada and the Hockey Hall of Fame. The winners, who will also receive a signed Team Canada jersey, were chosen from more than 1,000 nominations received from across the country.

“Johnny Ford is averse to public recognition but continues day after day (he drops by the rink every day, summer and winter, to ensure things are as they should be) to volunteer his time and energy, behind the scenes, to this facility that is the hub of our community,” said fellow Gray resident Lori Boesch in a nomination essay. “In small town Saskatchewan, community life revolves around the rink, and fundraising for the rink. Johnny has devoted himself to fundraising events here for more than half a century.”

As outlined in the nomination, Ford’s multi-tasking at the rink has also included Zamboni driving, concession operation, facility management and repair – all in a volunteer capacity.

RBC Insurance will donate \$10,000 to the program in Ford’s name. Ford is also invited to attend a special ceremony unveiling a display honouring the 2006-07 RBC Local Hockey Leaders at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. A banner recognizing his achievement will also be raised at Ford’s local arena.

“RBC Insurance is proud to recognize truly dedicated hockey volunteers like Johnny Ford,” said Neil Skelding, President and CEO, RBC Insurance. “Hockey is a way of life in many Canadian communities, and this simply wouldn’t happen without volunteers.”

**- more -**

The RBC Local Hockey Leaders program is now in its fourth year. A panel of experts including Hockey Hall of Fame Director of Public Affairs Ron Ellis, Chair of the Board for Hockey Canada René Marcil, and 2006 Olympic gold medalists Jennifer Botterill (Women's Ice Hockey) and Jean Labonté (Men's Sledge Hockey) selected the winners based on guidelines that include dedication, leadership, commitment and impact on hockey and hockey players in their community. To date, the program has donated more than \$450,000 to grassroots hockey initiatives across Canada.

"If you visit any arena in Canada, chances are you will hear people talking about the RBC Local Hockey Leaders program and about a volunteer in their community who is a perfect candidate for recognition," said Bob Nicholson, President, Hockey Canada. "This program resonates across the country, because every Canadian community has individuals that organize, administer, fundraise, coach and do whatever it takes to keep hockey vibrant in their communities. We appreciate RBC's continued leadership in recognizing these volunteers."

For more information and biographies on all of the RBC Local Hockey Leaders, please visit [www.rbcinsurance.com](http://www.rbcinsurance.com).

### **2007 Regional RBC Local Hockey Leaders:**

<b>Region</b>	<b>RBC Local Hockey Leader</b>	<b>Community</b>
Hockey North	Dale Smith	Cambridge Bay, NU
British Columbia	Gary Edwards	Cecil Lake, BC
Alberta	Brian Ennis	Red Deer, AB
Saskatchewan	Johnny Ford	Gray, SK
Manitoba	Harry Kazina	Tyndall, MB
Ontario	Murray Howard	London, ON
Northwestern Ontario	Dan Reynard	Kenora, ON
Ottawa District	Raymond & Cheryl Graham	Ottawa, ON
Quebec	Robert Nutbrown	Canton d'Ascot, QC
New Brunswick	Garry Brooks	Fredericton Junction, NB
Nova Scotia	John Murphy	Yarmouth, NS
Prince Edward Island	Terri MacDonald	Central Bedeque, PEI
Newfoundland & Labrador	Joseph Lane	Port Aux Basques, NFLD

### **About RBC Insurance**

RBC Insurance provides a wide range of creditor, life, health, travel, home, auto and reinsurance products and services to more than five million clients in Canada, the U.S. and internationally. These products and services are offered through a wide variety of distribution channels, including the telephone, independent brokers, travel agents, a proprietary sales force and the Internet. More information is available at [www.rbcinsurance.com](http://www.rbcinsurance.com).

### **For further information, please contact:**

Brian Findlay or Bob Stellick, 416-603-9452  
Jackie Braden, Media Relations, RBC, 416-974-2124