



Left to right: Sheldon Mindell, RHCF Executive Director; J. Laurie Johnston; N. R. Kasian, RHC President & CEO

J. Laurie Johnston donates \$500,000 to Riverview Health Centre Foundation

(taken from the Winnipeg Free Press online website posted 01/6/2012)

By: Staff Writer

Retired local pharmacist and businessman **J. Laurie Johnston has donated \$1,000,000** to be split evenly between the Misericordia and Riverview Health Centre foundations.

Johnston, who was raised in Regina but graduated from the University of Manitoba with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy degree, started a legacy fund 35 years ago. When the fund totalled \$1 million, he began searching for a suitable charity. After a great deal of research and interviews with several organizations, he decided to donate \$500,000 each to Misericordia and Riverview.

"I have put my trust in the PRIME program at Misericordia and the palliative care program at Riverview," Johnston said in a prepared statement. "PRIME, a day health centre for seniors, is designed to keep an aging population healthy and in their own homes." **"Riverview's excellent palliative care program exemplifies something I have always believed in, a comfortable and dignified death."**

A child of the Depression, Johnston told the story of how he saw his parents sharing what they had with those that had less. He said he was making his gift to repay a friend who gave him \$200 to cover his tuition, with the condition that he do something similar for someone else someday. It was a lesson he never forgot and he too wanted to make sure that he would be able to do acts of generosity. Johnston operated a pharmacy in Winnipeg for 20 years, and was recognized as Manitoba Pharmacist of the Year in 1977.

Hospital officials said they were grateful for Johnston's gift.

Réal Cloutier, chief operating officer and vice-president of long-term care for the Winnipeg Health Region, said he was very pleased Johnston had chosen to recognize the efforts and quality services provided through the two programs. "These are important initiatives that are proven to provide the kind of care Winnipeggers want and need as we prepare for the future," Cloutier said.

**ON BEHALF OF THE RHC RESIDENTS, PATIENTS AND STAFF AND
THE RHC & RHCf BOARDS OF DIRECTORS
WE WANT TO SAY A HUGE THANK-YOU TO
J. LAURIE JOHNSTON!!!**