

'You have to be involved if you want to make a difference' SDCF welcomes newest board member, Brian Chorney

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Brian Chorney is a third generation farmer and the newest member of the Selkirk and District Community Foundation Board. As someone who has volunteered throughout his life, he is excited to be part of a group known for its dedication to the communities it serves – Selkirk, St. Andrews and Chorney's home community of St. Clements.



Brian and Brenda Chorney built a home in St. Clements in 1996 so he could work on the family farm. It became his full-time occupation in 2000.

Chorney said he and his wife Brenda have been aware of the good work the Foundation does basically from the beginning – they had a business relationship with accountant Bill Findlater, a founding board member of the SDCF.

“Bill was there from Day 1 and he was very involved and talked about the Foundation with us,” Chorney said.

“We’ve always been aware over the years of the good they’ve done in the community, so we just thought if I can help in some small way, I’d be happy to do it.”

Chorney said his parents, John and Stella Chorney, set an example of volunteering – his mom was a 4-H leader for years and his dad part of the crew that started the East Selkirk Fire Department.

“They were always involved in many different community activities,” he said.

“And it’s something that Brenda and I have, kind of a philosophy, you have to be involved if you want to make a difference.”

Aaron Martyniw, Chair of the SDCF board, said Chorney will be an excellent addition.

“We’re excited to have Brian take a seat at our table,” Martyniw said.

“He’s been a community supporter and volunteer over the years and he cares about people and those qualities make him a perfect fit for the SDCF board. We’re happy to have him.”

Over the years Chorney has volunteered with the Happy Thought School Parent Advisory Council, East Selkirk Recreation Association, RM of St. Clements Drainage Committee and the Selkirk United Church.

He grew up on the family farm – which became a Century Farm in 2018 – and after graduating from the Comp Chorney earned a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Manitoba.

He and Brenda lived in the city and he worked in the ag industry, first doing technical sales before moving onto consulting work on product development.

They built a home in St. Clements in 1996 and Brian continued to do consulting while farming on the side but in 2000 he became full-time farmer.

He laughs and says people ask him if that was a good idea, and the short answer is, ‘yes’.

“I’m glad I did it. We raised two daughters out here and Brenda quit her job in the city, she was a music teacher and she ended up with the Lord Selkirk School Division and was at Happy Thought for 19 years and Robert Smith for four years before that,” he said.

The daughters – Sarah and Meghan – are now 28 and 30, respectively.

After returning to the farm full time, Chorney joined the Manitoba Canola Growers Board and was there for 14 years, the Canadian Canola Growers Board for eight years, the Canola Council of Canada Board for six years and the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association for a number of years as well.

In 2021 he was awarded the Canola Award of Excellence and in 2012 he received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Chorney was nominated to the SDCF Board by the RM of St. Clements.

The Selkirk and District Community Foundation is a charitable organization that provides financial support to charitable causes and agencies in the region, which includes Selkirk, St. Andrews and St. Clements. Gifts from donors enable the Foundation to support countless groups and individuals in our community. The Foundation has given in excess of \$3.4 million to more than 125 local charities and community organizations during its 25 years. For more details contact SDCF Executive Director Bev Clegg at 204.785.9755.