

---

# CANADA FEATURE

---

## Encouragement, Mentorship, Growth

### OVC students reflect on Real Life Real Impact in Saskatchewan

*By Rebekah Nethercott and Spencer King*

**Rebekah Nethercott, third year student at Ontario Veterinary College, writes:**

I am so thankful that we were able to make it to the RLRI retreat this year - we almost didn't!

On the way to Saskatoon from Ontario, we missed our connecting flight. It was a bit of a mix-up, but what mattered was that WE were in Calgary while OUR BAGS were flying to Saskatoon! And thank goodness they were. In the stress of considering rebooking flights after missing our connection, we thought about skipping RLRI altogether and visiting family in BC two days earlier than planned. But, that was not an option with no clothing! So, rather than waiting 10 hours for the next available flight, we decided to tackle the 8-hour drive instead. We would get to RLRI before our other flight would have left the terminal.



*From left: Jacob and Rebekah Nethercott, Lisa Balzer, Spencer and Iris King, Jewel Mickiewicz*

So many factors were at play, and God orchestrated them all! The biggest God-moment for me was that we shouldn't have been able to get the rental car we did. Four rental agencies later, the only reason we found a car in Calgary was that one agent took pity on us and called in a favor to a buddy with a rental shop 10 minutes away. It was the last car available for the pick-up and drop-off location we needed. Not to mention, there were no winter tires available but, thank the Lord, both Calgary and Saskatoon were having an abnormally mild weekend.

God knew what we needed to hear at the retreat. This May will be the first time in our marriage that Jacob (my husband) and I will both be in school full-time. He starts his master's program in London while I finish my fourth year at OVC. Although I am very excited about the future, trying to prioritize time together is a worry that I have been struggling to surrender. I often let that worry spiral into next year, once I graduate! The thought of balancing life together while one spouse is juggling a new career and the other completing a degree feels daunting. To compound it, I find that in the veterinary field the idea of prioritizing your marriage or family over clients and clinic is not often emphasized. I understand it. The reality is that this career can be all-consuming, that our personalities as veterinarians often lead us to people-pleasing and perfectionism... and none of these things lend themselves to balancing work and family well.

RLRI was a breath of fresh air and encouraged my worried heart. At almost every session, "Never forget to prioritize your marriage" was emphasized in some way. Combine that with the veterinarians' spouses who were present at the retreat, and other vet students who had spouses there too! It was a reminder that we are not alone in this journey of honouring God with our marriage, family, and careers. And that He provides community for us along the way.

I am so grateful we made it to RLRI this year. :)

**Spencer King, second year student at Ontario Veterinary College, writes:**

Going to RLRI was one of the best decisions I have made so far as a veterinary student. My wife, Iris, and I had the privilege of attending our first RLRI event in Saskatchewan and it was incredible!

Not only was it a privilege for us to be able to travel while I am a student, but it was also an incredible blessing to meet other people in the veterinary field who are serving Christ. For Iris and I to be able to share experiences, laughs, create memories, and develop friendships and mentor relationships with people from vet schools and practices all over the country is truly invaluable.

We thoroughly enjoyed participating in all that the weekend had to offer from phenomenal speakers to delicious meals to impactful worship and Bible teaching. We cannot wait to come back next year!



*“The Barnyard”: Dr. Becky Holvik with her animals - including Iris the goat, Spencer the horse, Sinéad the cow, and Jewel the chicken*



*Group bonding over broomball and other outdoor activities!*