

HEALTHY LIVING

'Quote unquote'

'No matter what age you are, it's how you feel that counts'
— Maureen Bailey

Plane fun: Local team places fifth

Sinews strained and tendons tightened under the weight of a blistering sun as Jane McKay and her team tried to budge Hannah.

But Hannah isn't a petulant child — rather, a 60-tonne Boeing 757 FedEx cargo plane.

McKay's team was one of 29 that took part in the fifth annual ORBIS "Pull for Sight" event at Pearson airport Sunday afternoon.

The name of McKay's 20-strong crew — "Jane's 12 Footers" — refers to the distance each competing team must pull the plane.

"Our group's won a fire truck-pulling competition the last two years so we were looking for a new challenge," said the Georgetown resident. "So when we heard about the chance to pull a plane we all jumped at it."

McKay is captain of a team of friends, who are perennial winners at the Links-2Care Fire Truck Pull in Georgetown. That annual event, which has participants pull a fire truck 50 feet, raises funds for the town's youth centres.

In Sunday's pull, team members donned special gloves for pulling the 60-tonne cargo plane.

Teams vied to see who can get to 12 feet the fastest. The Georgetown team took fifth place and raised about \$1,700 for the effort. To add to their total, visit <http://orbiscanada.akaraisin.com/pledge/Team/Home.aspx?seid=6946&mid=10&tid=61825>

McKay was joined by an unlikely teammate in her quest to beat the six-second record: her 75-year-old mother.

"I like to keep active and work out and go to yoga so there's no reason I shouldn't do this," Maureen Bailey said. "No matter what age you are, it's how you feel that counts."

Jane's 12 Footers couldn't achieve Jane's speed objective — they pulled the plane in 6.60 seconds. (Venture Aviation won fastest pull with 6.32 seconds.)

There was, however, a larger goal for the day: The event raised about \$53,000 for the charity, which for over 30 years — with the financial and logistical support of FedEx — has waged a battle against childhood blindness in developing na-



Members of Jane's 12 Footers team pose in front of the FedEx plane they pulled 12 feet to raise funds to help prevent children's blindness around the world. The Georgetown team, captained by Jane McKay, is made up of family and friends.

tions from Albania to Zambia.

Over the last five years, the clinical director of the Kensington Eye Institute has volunteered on missions with ORBIS, training local medical staff in countries such as El Salvador, Laos, Nigeria and Vietnam.

"You'll see a 2 or 3-year-old boy that's got a totally white eye, born with a cataract, meaning he's never seen," said Punch. "We do the surgery and he can see his mother for the first time."

Punch estimated that the money raised Sunday could pay for about 1,500

of these sight-saving operations that cost a mere \$35.

Caroline Huang, a development director with ORBIS, said that of the 19 million children who are visually impaired around the world, 80 per cent of cases are actually preventable.

"These kids don't have to be blind," she said. "We know the cause, we have the solution — it's all just about raising the money to help them."

—TorStar News Service with files from Cynthia Gamble, Staff Writer

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