

# Sponsors, donations needed for charity swim

(Continued from page A1)

"That looks like a Camp Ooch kid," I said," explained Greene, who approached Nancy in the store.

Sure enough, Greene was right and after talking for half an hour she and Nancy exchanged numbers and have stayed in contact ever since.

"And now we're buds," said Lauren.

Adds Nancy: "We've developed a nice friendship through this."

The Bakers relocated to Oakville from Eastern Canada in July 2000, but only five months later, just two days before Christmas, Lauren was diagnosed with leukemia. Prior to that, Nancy wondered whether it was a good idea to move west but now, living in such proximity to the world-class Hospital for Sick Children, she has her answer.

Nancy and her husband, Barry, were also blessed by the warm response of their new neighbours, who looked after their son, Ian, during week-hour medical emergencies, prepared Christmas dinner and offered help with everything in between.

"So much good has come of this," Nancy said. "We're not alone in this at all. It has really brought out the good in people."

For Lauren, a quick-witted and mischievous young woman, the experience has been a tough one and she still has six months left of both oral and intravenous chemotherapy. This will be followed by close monitoring for two years, all while trying to be "as normal a kid as possible," said Nancy.

Established in 1984 at Rosseau Lake College near Parry Sound, Camp Oochigeas caters to more than 200 youths every summer thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers.

While there are no fees, it costs \$2,100 for each camper to attend for two weeks. This includes transportation, activities, accommodation, meals and medical attention.

A paediatric oncologist and two oncology nurses from the Hospital for Sick Children are on site at all times. They administer routine chemotherapy, perform necessary blood counts and handle any emergencies.

The "Med Shed" allows campers who are taking treatment to attend as well as those who are off treatment.

"I can't say enough about the volunteers there," said Nancy. "I can't repay them."

When first approached about attending the camp, Lauren's reaction was a clear "No way!" Having already become withdrawn after her diagnosis, the thought of leaving her family for two weeks was unthinkable. She agreed to go after some convincing, but sending her off was difficult for Lauren's parents.

"The hardest thing I've ever done was to put her on that bus," said Nancy.

That was then. This is now: "It was the best thing for us. She came home with a new look on life," Nancy explained.

While at Camp Ooch, Lauren has learned to



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The family of young Lauren Baker are hoping Oakville residents will actively support Joy Greene's charity swim — the length of Lake Rosseau. The two, pictured, above, have developed a strong friendship. Through her swim, Greene hopes to raise both money and awareness for Camp Oochigeas — Canada's first residential camp for children with cancer.

water ski, rock climb and canoe and has experienced unparalleled camaraderie with the other campers — all while undergoing active treatment.

"Nobody noticed I was different," said Lauren. "Everyone was in the same boat. It's so much fun, time just flies by."

Even while back home enduring chemo, Lauren said just thinking of the camp has helped her cope.

Once old enough, she has her sights set on becoming a Leader in Training at the facility.

"I want to stay at Camp Ooch as long as possible," said Lauren who, when she's cancer-free for two years after treatment, will receive a Camp Oochigeas paddle.

Which brings us back to Greene, who is doing her part to promote and raise funds for the camp and would love to hear from individuals or local businesses interested in sponsoring her swim.

"No donation is too small," she said.

RBC has supported her in the past, but more backing is needed if Greene is to send youngsters to camp.

"Oakville as a community needs to get more behind Joy," said Nancy.

Adds Lauren: Help give a kid a more enjoyable summer."

Anyone wishing to donate to the camp (it receives no government funding) can make cheques payable to Camp Oochigeas, 60 St. Clair Ave. East, Suite 201, Toronto, Ontario, M4T 1N5 or call 1-888-GO-4-OOCH.



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Professional Business Women and executives empowering and supporting women in our community and Internationally is Zonta's mission statement. This so clearly mirrors the ATHENA model: awarding fellow men and/or women who make it their life's work and passion to mentor, support and empower women in this community.

Those who receive this award have shown tremendous effort in philanthropy, advocacy, courage, continued learning, passion in their work and balance in their family life all for the greater good of helping women to rise to the occasion.

Zonta is proud to have continued our sponsorship with the ATHENA program here in Oakville and look forward to continued years of support.

Liana Renwick-Palmerio, President



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Michele's entrepreneurship and many years of experience in marketing, design and communications led to the incorporation of Blazing Design Inc. in 1994. Blazing Design offers clients strategic marketing solutions, both digital and print, through exceptional design, customer service and value.

Michele's endless enthusiasm and warm personality have allowed her to grow this business almost solely from referrals.

As past Vice President of Communications for the Women Entrepreneurs of Canada, Michele has actively represented Canadian business in South Africa and Portugal.

In 1999 she was nominated for the Women Entrepreneur of the Year Award, a very prestigious nomination for a young entrepreneur. Michele also currently acts as an advisor to the Royal Bank's Small Business Advisory Council, and was chosen as the advertising agency to represent Canada for the International Marketing Professional Association (IMPA).

And most of all, Michele is proud to be a sponsor of the ATHENA Foundation Program.



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Michele Bailey, President  
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