

Volunteers pitch in

Cancer Society kicks off campaign

Local Cancer Society includes Acton, Georgetown branches

April is Cancer Month, and the Halton Hills unit of the Canadian Cancer Society has set itself a goal of \$34,000 to be raised in a month of special events and canvassing.

The Canadian Cancer Society offers a great number of services to cancer patients and their families at the local level, through the Halton Hills unit. The Herald met recently with members of the executive to discuss the services provided by the cancer society for patients and for families, and also of the cancer society's need for funds and additional volunteers.

The cancer society is run strictly by volunteers at the local level, although specific services such as home nursing are provided by professionals. Fourteen volunteers are on the executive in Acton, and in Georgetown, and co-ordinate programs such as education, service to patients, transportation and campaigning. Volunteers are needed, particularly those who would be willing to drive patients to Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto for their treatments.

LITTLE DIFFERENT
The cancer society is a little different from many of the health-related charities, Georgetown area campaign chairman Claudette Smith said, in that a larger portion of its funds go into service to patients, as opposed to research. A large portion of the funds are also spent on education, with the emphasis on prevention.

The goal of the Halton Hills unit this year is to knock on every door in town and reach every resident of Halton Hills, be they homeowners, business owner or factory owner. Daffodil Day is also a major fundraising event, and will be held on April 6 and 7 in Acton and Georgetown this year. Private pre-orders are accepted for a dozen daffodils, but the society would prefer that a group of people get together to order a dozen each, to minimize the driving involved in delivery.

Service to patients is a large portion of the regular activities of the cancer society. Services include drugs for patients in financial need, dressing, home and hospital visiting, nursing services, housekeeping in cases of emergency and financial need, home nursing in cases of financial need, patient transportation for treatment, visits and other assistance to mastectomy patients and other services to assist patients and their families in coping with cancer.

"People aren't aware of the services we are prepared to supply," Merry Little, Georgetown service to patients chairman said. "The cancer society is almost unique in its level of service to patients."

Photos and stories by Lori Taylor

The Halton Hills unit maintains an office at 5 Wesleyan Street in Georgetown, in the Manderson and Hyde building. The office is located on the second floor and is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. During campaign month, the office will be open every afternoon.

Nan Brooker, staff secretary, said the office contains a

great deal of educational information on cancer, and students looking for information for projects are welcome to stop in at the office and look through the literature. The office also has articles made by the activity group, including knitted items, macrame designs and ceramics, which can be purchased. The proceeds go to the cancer society, since the items are all made

and donated by volunteers. The cancer society has a 24-hour answering service which can contact members in case of an emergency. The unit phone number is 877-1124.

The response of the people of Halton Hills to past requests for funds has been excellent, members of the unit executive agree, and they are hoping the town will continue to be supportive of the society and enable it to continue to provide the services that cancer patients need so badly.

Campaign goal set at \$34,000

The goal of the Halton Hills unit of the Canadian Cancer Society is to raise \$34,000 this year to help support the many programs and services provided by the society and the campaign will be kicked off April 1 with an Egg McMuffin breakfast at McDonald's in Georgetown.

McDonald's will be donating most of the cost of each Egg McMuffin purchased Sunday morning to the cancer society and patrons must buy an Egg McMuffin for McDonald's to make a donation. Tom Sargent farms of Milton is supplying the eggs. Claudette Smith, Georgetown's campaign chairman, emphasized that it is the entire cost of the Egg McMuffin, and not just the profit, which is being donated.

LIMITED TIME
Mrs. Smith also emphasized that those people wishing to buy an Egg McMuffin must visit McDonald's between 7 a.m. and 11 a.m. After 11 a.m., the grills will be switched over for the lunch menu, and the Egg McMuffins will no longer be available. Last year, the society received over \$400 from McDonald's.

The following weekend, April 6 and 7, will be devoted to the sale of daffodils throughout Halton Hills. Volunteers will be stationed in strategic spots in Acton and Georgetown, such as outside the GO station, Georgetown Cinemas 3, and banks in both towns. The high schools will be targets, and the society will also be taking industrial orders, and order from individuals. The society would prefer that groups of people get together to place order, to simplify the delivery of the flowers.

The rest of the month of April will be devoted to conducting a door-to-door canvass of the entire town, with the goal of the society being "to knock

on every door in Halton Hills'. Acton is responsible for conducting the canvass in that area, and a large rural area as well. Georgetown will handle the town itself and the rural areas from the 5th Line east, and from the town line at Ballinafad to 5 Sideroad.

Mrs. Smith said the industrial canvass is being handled by Judy Goebelle and Dee Butwell will be handling the canvass of the commercial areas in Georgetown.

The door-to-door canvass provides an opportunity for the society's volunteers to reach the households for educational purposes as well, and this year the canvassers will be carrying an envelope which can be used to submit a donation, to register with the society as a cancer patient, or to volunteer for work with the society. The envelope also explains some facts about cancer, the cancer society, and the services it provides.

PUBLIC SERVICE
"The canvassers will be equipped with educational materials, and we're trying to make our campaign a public service as well as a request for funds," Mrs. Smith said.

The society will be holding other fund-raising events during the course of the year. The main event coming up is Bill Smith's golf tournament at the North Halton Golf and Country Club on June 25. Last year the tournament raised over \$3,000 for the society. Participants pay a required donation, which covers the green fees and a dinner. The prizes in the tournament are donated, but companies and individuals can buy holes for \$100 per company and \$25 per individual.

"The people of Halton Hills are extremely generous in terms of money and time," Mrs. Smith said. "The support is good for us. It's seldom you run into somebody who won't help. Just about everyone we

approach is very supportive of us. That's what makes my job so easy."

Arlie White, campaign manager in Acton, said much of the credit for the smoothness with which the campaign runs, and the success each year, is due to the hard work of the canvassers.

Mr. White has been campaign chairman for five years, and he said that although Acton has grown in those years, the canvassers have been able to increase their efforts to match. The first year he was campaign manager, the branch in Acton raised \$5,800 and last year, it was just under \$12,000.

ACTON BRANCH
The Acton branch is holding a social evening March 31 to kick off their campaign, but tickets are pretty well sold out now. Acton branch president Gloria Coats said it is possible that the branch will be holding other dances and social evenings later in the year.

"It's an honor to belong to such a wonderful group of people who really work to raise the money we need," Mr. White said. "The donors are 60 per cent of the campaign, and the volunteers are the other 40 per cent. Without them we'd be nowhere."

"As chairman, I'm just a little cog in a mighty machine that really makes things tick for the cancer society in April," he said.

The nation-wide goal of the cancer society this year is \$16.5 million, with \$3 million of that coming from Ontario. Of each dollar raised, 55 cents goes to research, 18 cents to service to patients, 14 cents to education, 6 cents to administration, 5 cents to campaign expenses, and 2 cents for the construction and maintenance of lodges for cancer patients who live too far from the hospital to drive in daily for treatment.



Georgetown campaign chairman Claudette Smith, second from the left, shows other members of the Georgetown executive the new folder which will be used for the first time this year for collecting donations in the cancer society's annual canvass. The other members of the executive are, from left to right, Diane McCracken, Hugh Patterson and Dee Butwell.

Unique level of patient service includes drivers, counselling

The Canadian Cancer society is almost unique in its level of service to patients, according to service to patients chairman Merry Little of Georgetown.

"People aren't aware of the services we are prepared to supply," Mrs. Little said. "Any problems they have, anything we can, we do, to make life easier for patients." Among the services offered to active treatment patients by local units of the cancer society are visits to patients at home and in the hospital, the provision of dressings, advice from cured patients to someone who has just undergone the same operation, such as a breast cancer patient or a colostomy patient, providing drugs in cases of financial need, home nursing, housekeeping and transportation to hospitals or clinics for treatment.

SERVICES VARY

The services provided vary from unit to unit, and within units. While the Acton branch of the Halton Hills unit has two volunteers who make periodic home visits to patients who are lonely, the Georgetown unit has not started a home visit program as yet. Mrs. Little said they think it might be best to have registered nurses, or retired nurses to visit patients at home, "so they know what not to say to patients". Mrs. Coats said the situation is very delicate, and must be handled carefully.

The Georgetown branch has three women who, having had breast cancer themselves, visit breast cancer patients following surgery, and assist them with to cope with the situation. Acton has one woman who visits the patients at the hospital or at home. These women help the patient to accept the situation, and aid her with such things as purchasing a prosthesis.

The Georgetown branch serviced 400 patients last year, and while Acton had fewer patients, both branches are always ready for volunteers to assist in providing patient services. Georgetown in particular is in need of volunteers to drive active treatment patients to Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto for treatment.

Mrs. Little figures they could use fifteen more drivers, to more evenly distribute the trips among the drivers. Georgetown volunteers made about 350 trips to Toronto last

year. Drivers are paid a mileage fee of 18.5 cents a mile.

Many volunteers are concerned that they would have to spend lengthy periods of time waiting for patients to receive their treatment. Cynthia Green, who is a volunteer driver, in addition to being chairman of the Daffodil Day, said that while she tries not to have any other activities planned for the days she is going to Toronto, the trip rarely takes more than the morning.

REALLY ROTTEN

The patients sometimes feel "really rotten" following their treatment, Mrs. Little said, and sometimes they just want to relax on the trip home. She said they may want to talk, or they may not, depending on how the treatment went.

"I find it's a very worthwhile thing to do, helping people," Mrs. Green said. "The patients are all ambulatory, so it's not a matter of helping people in and out of wheelchairs."

Very few patients are seriously ill following their treatment, Mrs. Green said. If the patient has a bad reaction to the treatment, the hospital will keep them there for observation.

"The patients want to have somebody to talk to," said Mrs. Green. "Patients some

times talk about their illness, but unless they bring it up, I don't mention it."

"Our drivers are very necessary people," Acton branch president Gloria Coats said. Patients from Acton are taken to Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto, and also to Henderson General Hospital in Hamilton. The Acton drivers travelled a total distance of 3,020 miles last year.

Some of the services provided by the society are restricted to cases of financial need. The society is allowed to provide drugs if the patients is in need, but only certain kinds, usually pain relievers. Housekeeping services are also available in cases of financial need when the homemaker is disabled because of cancer, but the service can only be provided for a maximum of four weeks. Home nursing is available to patients for a period of 336 hours, and is provided by professional nursing companies. A public health nurse usually visits the patient at the request of the patients' doctor and assesses the situation to determine if the need exists.

MUST CONSULT

Before providing almost any service to cancer patients, the patient's physician and a public health nurse must be consulted, Mrs. Little said.

CANCER SOCIETY ACCEPTS BEQUESTS

Requests and donations in memoriam are becoming an increasingly larger percentage of the funds raised by the cancer society, and both Acton and Georgetown have people who will accept donations.

Gifts can be made to the cancer society in memory of a departed friend or relative, and bequests can be included in wills to leave money to the society.

Those wishing to make donations in commemoration can contact Elma Iralda in Acton at 853-0820, or Bea Clark in Georgetown at 126 Main Street South.

CANCER FACTS

The incidence of cancer has been increasing over the past few years as average life expectancy is prolonged, since the risk of cancer increases with age. The survival rate for individuals has increased greatly in some areas, and more negligibly in others. However, one out of every five deaths in North America is caused by cancer, and much remains to be done in researching the prevention, diagnosis, detection, treatment of the disease.

SEVEN WARNING SIGNALS

- The prevention, early detection and treatment of cancer is your personal responsibility, the Canadian Cancer Society says. Many cancers can be prevented or successfully treated if you practice the seven steps to health.
- 1) Have a medical and dental check-up.
 - 2) Watch for any change in your normal state of health.
 - 3) Find out about any lump or sore that does not heal.
 - 4) Protect yourself against too much sunlight.
 - 5) Do not smoke.
 - 6) Have a Pap test.
 - 7) Do a monthly breast self-examination.

The doctors are aware of the services the cancer society provides, she said, and they call on the cancer society if one of their patients is in need.

The cancer society has a medical advisor who is available in case of emergency, and will advise the society if the need arises. The Halton Hills unit has a 24-hour emergency answering service, and if a patient has a medical emergency and can't get in touch with their own doctor, they can contact the cancer society's answering service and be put in touch with the medical advisor.

Most patients see their family doctor first when they discover symptoms they can't account for, Mrs. Little said, before going on to a specialist in cancer treatment, so that the medical advisor usually isn't called out, although he is empowered to order an ambulance or have a patient admitted to hospital if he feels it is necessary.

The medical advisor also provides for a liaison with the medical community. Mrs. Little said the doctors have been very helpful to the society.

Mrs. Coats said the Acton branch is always looking for volunteers, particularly in the areas of education and services.

ALWAYS WELCOME

"Volunteers are always welcome," she said. "We feel it's good for our society to get new volunteers with new ideas". The Acton branch has about 50 volunteers for drivers, activities and service to patients.

Activities people make knitted items, ceramics or macrame articles for sale, with the proceeds to go to the cancer society. The society pays for the necessary materials, but the volunteers do the work for free. Mrs. Coats said the Acton branch has a tea in the spring for the activity workers, to express the society's appreciation for their efforts.

Mrs. Butwell said the society definitely needs more volunteers.

"The more people we have, the better job we can do," she said. "We can use people who would be willing to campaign, or do emergency driving, or man display booths, assist in education programs. There are jobs for people who can't commit too much of their time, and jobs for people who have more time to give."

The Georgetown branch holds an appreciation night in June for its volunteers, including canvassers, and other supporters, to say thank you to the people who have devoted their time to the society during the year.

"We've been very fortunate in having people who are caring," Mrs. Coats said of the Acton volunteers. "I feel services are the heart of the society — the patients' needs are our concerns, and any way we can help them, we'll do it."



MERRY LITTLE

Education is important to local society

Education is an important part of the Canadian Cancer Society's program to combat the fear which often prevents people from seeking a doctor's advice immediately when they begin to suspect they may have cancer.

Mary Ellen Bridge is the education chairman for the Georgetown branch, and Cathy McGillivray is the chairman in Acton. These two women are responsible for organizing the education program to reach young people, adults and industry. The purpose of the education program is to inform people about cancer, Mrs. Bridge said.

The cancer society has kits for the different grade levels in the schools, with kits for kindergarten to grade three, grade four to grade six, and a new kit for grades seven and eight. The public school kits stress mainly the advantages to not smoking, and also good health habits.

SCHOOLS KITS

There are kits for the high school level, as well which provide information on breast self-examination, among other topics. The cancer society pro-

vides literature to the schools and will arrange for speakers to come to the school to talk about various aspects of the disease and research.

The educational programs for adults involve mainly special events such as the cancer forums which have been held in the past couple of years, and special displays at the fall fairs, during Pioneer Days, Back to Acton Days and on any other occasion at which the education chairman thinks it would be appropriate for the society to take part.

The society provides speakers to service clubs and other organizations on any aspect of cancer, and will provide films for any group who wishes to contact them.

The industrial education program involves the placing of the appropriate literature on cancer in each factory or industry in the community. A registered nurse visits factories and industries across the province, showing films and giving talks on health care, with emphasis on cancer.

"The emphasis in our education program is prevention," Mrs. Bridge said.