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The Georgetown Hearing Clinic is happy to announce that from hearing aid purchases made in June we were able to donate \$3300 to the Red Cross/Fort McMurray relief Fund.

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Introducing Geoff, the superhero brother of a local girl with cancer

Many Halton residents have been personally touched by cancer but childhood cancer remains the number-one cause of death by disease among Canadian children past infancy.

Of the children who survive cancer, two-thirds will suffer long-term side effects from treatments. September marks Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and Halton parents have come together to support other families dealing with childhood cancer.

Siblings of children with cancer are also deeply affected. Their lives are put on hold while parents deal with treatments, lengthy hospital stays and medical appointments.

Siblings make sacrifices that most families would never consider asking of their children.

Ten-year-old Geoff Stewart is one of those siblings. Geoff, a Grade 5 student at Ethel Gardiner Public School in Georgetown, will be the Honourary Chairperson for Neon Night, a fundraising walk with funds going specifically to childhood cancer research, advocacy and support programs.

The super hero themed walk will take place on the evening of Saturday, Sept. 24 at the Gellert Community Center Park in Georgetown, sponsored by the Canadian Cancer Society.

Geoff does not remember life before cancer affected his family. He was two years old when his five-year-old sister, Kathryn, was originally diagnosed with Stage IV Neuroblastoma.

Neuroblastoma can develop anywhere in the sympathetic nervous system, but it starts most often in the abdomen in the adrenal gland that lies just above the kidney. It can also start near the spinal cord in the neck, chest or pelvis. Neuroblastoma most commonly develops in babies and young children. Kathryn, now 13, has recently relapsed for the fourth time.

When Kathryn was diagnosed, Geoff was sent to live with his grandparents for a year. He could not be near his sister, who had a fragile immune system due to treatments, in case he gave her any type of infection.

Geoff did not see his Mom, Heather Stewart, for more than three months at a time because she was busy helping Kathryn and they did not want to risk any infections. Kathryn spent two of every three weeks in hospital.

Recently, Geoff got to meet former Toronto Maple Leaf Phil Kessel when he dropped by Sick Children's Hospital with the Stanley Cup he won as a member of the Pittsburgh Penguins.

The Stewart family has spent time traveling to California, Disneyworld, New York City and to Europe so that they can help cre-



Geoff Stewart does not remember a time when cancer wasn't a part of his life.

ate special memories and lots of special experiences with the entire family.

Geoff has also spent time over the summer at Camp Trillium, learning archery, fishing and being with other children affected by childhood cancer.

As Geoff has gotten older, he often keeps Kathryn company by going with her to treatments when he can.

Geoff's advice to other siblings of cancer patients is to treat your sibling normally, try to spend lots of time with them when they are feeling well enough and not to over-worry. Being treated normally is a wish for many childhood cancer patients who dream of being just like every other child.

The Canadian Cancer Society has funded \$44 million in childhood cancer research in the last 15 years, which is more than any other Canadian charity.

The investment is paying off; the five-year survival rate has increased to 83 per cent today, a great improvement from 71 per cent in the 1980s.

Canadian Cancer Society funded research has discovered that retinoblastoma, a cancer of the eye, arises in children when the RB1 gene is mutated. Doctors can now test for RB1 to diagnose and treat cancer earlier.

Neon Night is a non-competitive fun run. Cancer is the villain and participants are the superheroes fighting cancer.

Registration for the event is \$40 for adults, \$10 for children and free for children under six. Exclusive Crush Cancer t-shirts will be awarded to individuals who also fundraise \$150 or more and hooded Crush Cancer sweatshirts to individuals who fundraise \$500 or more in your choice of colour.