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**NEWS**

## "I COULD WALK MY DOG," ACTON WOMAN STARTS GOFUNDME PAGE TO GET MOTORIZED WHEELCHAIR

ALEXANDRA HECK  
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When the pain is almost intolerable for Kerri Maich, she lies on a daybed in her living room.

Her four-year-old German shepherd, Bear, doesn't leave her side. He curls up beside her, with a paw on her shoulder.

Maich is living with severe spinal stenosis and scoliosis, which four years ago left her wheelchair-bound. The conditions are inoperable, because Maich is also living with a chronic form of leukemia, which has compromised her immune system.

Some days the pain is worse than others, and when it's bad, her beloved German shepherd seems to

know.

"He won't leave my side," she said, explaining that her husband sometimes has to drag him away just to get him to go and do his business.

Currently, Maich uses a manual wheelchair to get around, but as her ailments progress, the pain in her spine is making it more difficult for her to propel herself.

"If I had a powered wheelchair, I could get myself to the doctors," she said. "I could get down to the mailbox on my own. I could walk my dog."

The device that she is seeking is a lightweight, folding motorized wheelchair. It's a \$4,000 machine that isn't covered by Ontario's Assistive Devices Pro-



Alexandra Heck/Metroland

Kerri Maich is an Acton woman living with spinal stenosis, scoliosis and Leukemia, who is raising money for a motorized wheelchair.

gram.

"A full-sized wheelchair just wouldn't fit my needs," she said, noting that her 80-year-old mother helps her get around most days.

She says she was also considering a conversion kit to add a motor to her current wheelchair, but the cost would be the same.

"We've looked at several options," she said, before she chose to start a GoFundMe page to try to raise money for the device.

She said that if 300 people were to donate \$10, she would have the funding.

To donate, visit Maich's GoFundMe page.

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