

Jesse's Journey touches hearts

By ANGELA TYLER
The New Tanner

John Davidson has a mission. He wants to make a difference. Davidson's son Jesse suffers from Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and John wants to help conquer the genetic disease by raising \$1 million for research.

This past Saturday, Davidson's entourage which is titled "Jesse's Journey, A Father's Tribute" made its way through Halton Hills. In 1995 John pushed Jesse, who is confined to a wheelchair, 3,300 km across Ontario. This time, Jesse is unable to participate and John is spending 10 months or 265 days trekking across Canada to raise awareness and funds for genetic diseases.

Davidson's journey began in St. John's, Newfoundland on April 10 on Jesse's 18th birthday. On Thursday, Davidson is scheduled to arrive in his hometown of London, Ontario. It would be four months since he last saw his son. His wife recently was able to catch up with him in Ottawa for a short reunion. "I'm looking forward to seeing them, although it will be a short visit," Davidson said.

Davidson averages walking 33 kms per day. Saturday he started at Highway 7 and Mississauga Road. At the Georgetown Alcott Arena, Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson joined Davidson as she did in 1995. They traveled through Georgetown and continued to the other side of Acton, just past the Dublin Line and Highway 7.

"I would have started with him at Mississauga Road, but I didn't think I could do it," Serjeantson said. "I think we had pretty good support (in Acton)."



STILL SMILING after walking all day in Saturday's hot temperatures, John Davidson takes a quick break.

At a brief stop at the new Acton Arena, Davidson and crew stopped for a quick rest and lots of water. It is an incredible feeling of inspiration one gets in the presence of this dedicated group of people, all but two are volunteers. Nobody complained about the heat or of being tired even though the expression on many of their faces told that they were looking forward to the end of the day. With soaring temperatures the group continued to do what they do day after day; wave at cars and on-lookers, smile and thank well-wishers, hand out brochures after brochures, doing whatever they can to get their message out and are incred-

ibly grateful when receiving donations, whether it be \$1 or \$10.

Although his voyage is titled "Jesse's Journey, A Father's Tribute" the focus of the group is not on him, it is on the reason; to raise money for genetic research. However it is difficult not to focus on him and his crew. With a smile on his face he takes time to talk to all that want to talk to him. He continually does interviews, in person and by cellular phone.

Davidson was asked if there is always someone walking with him. "Not always. There are a lot of stretches where there isn't anybody," he replied. What does he think about when he's by himself besides his family? "I don't really get a thought pattern going. You're usually waving at someone going by or someone stops to talk with you."

Davidson's crew not only helps with traffic and providing a place to rest either in the camper or mini-vans, they also provide emotional comfort, walking companions, fund raisers, media contacts and they scout the area ahead and clock the upcoming distance. They are, in a way, Davidson's eyes and ears. All the back up support on the road is from the province the journey is travelling through. Davidson thought it was important that each province support the journey

this way.

After scouting Acton ahead of Davidson, his crew returned to the camper resting at the Acton Arena. They could not help but notice the number of empty downtown storefronts. However, in contrast they also commented about the uniqueness of some of the stores including Clark's Newfoundland Store, The Holland Shop and MacMillan's. Bevin Palmateer, Davidson's media contact, was very impressed with the support of Acton residents. Before Davidson entered Acton, they had already collected more than \$100. Initial tallies indicate that area residents donated \$2,675 to Jesse's Journey. Palmateer is hoping they will receive funds through the mail with the donation envelopes they distributed.

Donations can be made at 1-888-433-9366 or Jesse's Journey, A Father's Tribute, P.O. Box 5099, Station B, London, Ontario N6A 9Z9.

Controlled burn spreads

Acton firefighters were called to a proposed rural estate subdivision at the southwest corner of 32 Sideroad and Dublin Line at 8:41 p.m. Wednesday to battle a planned burn of brush and wood that blazed out of control. Tinder-dry conditions are blamed for fanning the fire on the Legend Homes property. The owners had a valid burn permit from the Town.

MISSING \$200 REWARD



Have You Seen Charlie?

Charlie is a long-haired orange (ginger) part-Persian cat with white hair on chest and legs. He is 20 years old. He has lost some of his sight and his hearing is impaired as well.

Besides looking for him in your neighbourhood, please check your garage, storage shed, under deck and swimming pool.

Charlie is a much loved and dearly missed member of our family and we want him safely back home on Churchill Road North.

Please call 853-0646

NOTICE OF MEETING

Re: Old Acton Arena

Sunday, August 9, 1998

1:00 p.m.

In front of the Acton Town Hall



Heritage Acton is calling a meeting of all persons interested in retaining the Community Arena in Prospect Park, Acton.

Bring your ideas, suggestions and enthusiasm!

Will you volunteer to be on a restoration committee?

Heritage Acton

"Not all old buildings should be demolished"

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couple of Saturdays open and a few prime Friday nights. If you are interested, contact George O'Donnell at 853-0910. We can easily accommodate groups up to 350 people for a fully catered meal that's second to none, put on by our Ladies' Auxiliary. Please book early.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 15 - Fun Golf Day. Tickets \$25 each, available at the branch.

Aug. 22 - Free Corn Roast

Sept. 10 - Legion Masters Golf Tour

Sept. 14 - General Meeting

Oct. 24 - General Meeting

Oct. 24 - Octoberfest

See you at the Branch!

ADVANCE NOTICE

up to **40%** off
true m.s.l.

preseason SALE

LEATHER · SUEDE · SHEARLING

This ADVANCE NOTICE Invitation gives you 2 weeks to enjoy first choice from our new fall stock - all leather, suede and shearling coats now on sale!

THE OLDE HIDE HOUSE

Open Daily 10am - 6pm, Fri 10am - 9pm • 49 Eastern Ave. Acton • 853-1031

**Visit our booth at
the Leathertown
Festival!**

Sunday, August 9



12 Main St. N., Acton (519) 853-1960

