

Kick-fit-a-thon planned for Nov. 18

Local karate club offers help in 'little fighter's' bid to walk

Helen English was told her daughter would never walk. She refused to believe that. Now her exercise classmates are banding together to help make sure her dream becomes a reality.

Four-year-old Emma English has cerebral palsy but a trip to a special camp has her mother believing she will see her daughter walk on her own. The only barrier is the cost—\$4,000 per visit.

Boreland's School of Karate class instructor Pam Boreland learned of the camp after English missed several weeks of class. English told her that she had been at the camp with Emma and Boreland was moved by the story.

"My heart was touched," Boreland said. "I was blessed to have three healthy children and you realize how lucky you are."

English attended The Ability Camp in Picton, Ont. with Emma. The five-week camp offers an intensive therapy program five hours each day, five days a week. After Emma's first visit she is able to walk using parallel bars.

"I was very pleased (with the results) but I wasn't surprised," English said. "Emma's a little fighter."

Boreland had held two kick-fit-a-thons to raise money for charity—both bringing in more than \$1,700—and thought it would be great to hold one for Emma. What she didn't anticipate was how much everyone else would get behind the event.

"The response has been unbelievable," Boreland said.

Emma's kick-fit-a-thon is well on its way to tripling the money raised by the other events. One man, who had two daughters in the class, took the sponsor sheet to work. When co-workers heard about Emma they decided to donate the proceeds of their golf tournament—\$4,090. Some people have come back for as many as three sponsor sheets. One company donated office supplies to be sold with the proceeds going to Emma's camp fund.

"We'll just keep going and try to send her to as many camps as we can," Boreland said.

English has already booked Emma for a return visit to the camp in February.

"It's one of the best things I've done for Emma," English said. "We just have to carry on and be very positive."

The kick-fit-a-thon will be held November 18 at Boreland's School of Karate. Donations are being accepted at the school, located at 235 Guelph Street.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer

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