

To fulfill lifelong dream Ex-resident intent on scaling Everest

Ever since he caught a glimpse of Mount Everest on the pages of National Geographic more than 25 years ago, Glenn Edwards has dreamed of climbing it.

Next spring, that dream will be realized when the former Georgetown man attempts to become the first Canadian to scale the peak without supplementary oxygen.

Edwards, who now lives in Orangeville and works as a Markham firefighter, will not only be achieving a dream he has talked about and shared for many years with his father Ken, he will also be raising money for the Children's Wish Foundation of Canada.

He is hoping to raise \$88,500 for the foundation through his summit of the highest peak in the world (29,035 ft) by collecting pledges of \$25 for each metre he climbs. The Children's Wish Foundation grants wishes to children who suffer from high risk, life-threatening illnesses.

"Through our dream to climb Everest I'm hoping that my father and I can offer an opportunity for kids to live their dream," says Edwards. His father, from whom he inherited his love of the outdoors and climbing, will serve as base camp manager on the expedition, and his wife Karen and two daughters will stay at a nearby village.

Edwards, 34, has been preparing for months for the rigours of the six to seven-week climb up Everest without oxygen, which is set for next March.

"You must have drive and I've been working on my physical drive as well as my mental drive."

To push himself past normal limits he has been participating in adventure racing which includes trekking, canoeing and cycling.

He says through the racing he now knows what it feels like to fall asleep while walking, and hallucinating after

having 37 minutes of sleep in 52 hours.

"Many Everest summiters will claim that they have seen apparitions while on their final push to the summit." He believes that is due to sleep deprivation and exhaustion.

He has been climbing mountains for 12 years—in the Canadian Rockies, South America, Mexico and Nepal. His highest peak to date is 22,000 ft in Peru.

Accompanying him on the climb will be three Sherpa climbers from the area that he has hired. One has been to the summit before.

While some might see climbing without supplementary oxygen as more dangerous than with it, Edwards says he views it actually as a safety measure.

"I'd rather find out 2,000 ft. earlier that this isn't something that I can physically do and then turn around."

While he would love to reach the top of Everest he won't be heartbroken if he doesn't.

"Reaching the top would be wonderful but in the grand scale of life it's just a nanosecond of your existence and the build-up to it is what memories are made of."

He says his perception of the climb goes beyond the summit.

"It's the journey and the journey began years ago with the idea, and the discussions with my father, and developing a dream into reality."

So far Edwards has raised approximately \$7,000 for Children's Wish Foundation, and says if he doesn't reach his goal through the climb he will continue to raise the money until he does.

Anyone interested in making a pledge to Edwards' climb should call 1-888-711-6911, (519) 938-8463 or www.heroesinmotion.com.

Former Georgetown resident Glenn Edwards, an avid climber, hopes to scale Mount Everest next spring.

Donation cheques should be made payable to Children's Wish Foundation and can be mailed to Canadian Fire Fighter Expedition Office, 335 Jay Cr., Orangeville, Ontario, L9W 4Y7. Include full name and address so tax receipts can be issued.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer



Walking the walk



St. Catherine of Alexandria students took part in the International Walk to School day last week to promote healthy living and fitness, as well as preserve clean air quality. The first 200 students (below) arriving at St. Catherine received key tags from waiting teachers. Displaying their key tags, the first five students arriving included (from left) Nicole Drys, Haden Soler, Matthew Lamanna, teacher Ann Voutour, Alyssa Lamanna, Corey Hayward and teacher Suzanne Hutcheson. At left, Grades 5 to 8 students took part in a lunch hour walk to Georgetown South Sports Park. Photos by Ted Brown



Town wants to increase parking fine

The town will apply to the provincial government to increase the fine for parking in designated disabled spots from \$100 to \$500.

While the current fine is \$100, the new Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) sets the minimum fine at \$300. The town is required to apply to Chief Judge of the Province of Ontario to change its fine.

However council wanted to send a message to offenders and increased the fine to \$500.

"I don't think we're delivering a very

strong message if we take the least amount of money," said Councillor Bryan Lewis. "The idea is 'don't park in those spots' without proper authority. We don't want to collect any money and all we're asking our citizens to do is stay out and let the handicapped people have those parking spots."

Mayor Kathy Gastle agreed, saying it might even make business owners more diligent in signage of their parking spots.

The ODA allows municipalities to set a maximum fine of \$5,000.

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