

Health, Beauty & Fitness

TOPS applauds weight loss achievers

The Halton/Peel chapters of TOPS (Taking Pounds Off Sensibly) held their annual Fellowship Day at the Bolton Community Centre last weekend. This year's theme was "Wish Upon a TOPS Star".

TOPS 2004 Provincial & International Queen, Carrie Ramsey from London with a loss of 175 lbs and the 2004 Ontario King, Glen Clifford from Brampton, with a loss of 82 lbs attended. They both shared their experiences and urged chapter members to never give up.

Everyone in attendance enjoyed various activities through the day such as skits, sing-alongs, and exercise breaks, but most importantly, recognition for their weight-loss efforts. After the Pounds Plus recognition, which is for a member's loss of 10 pounds or more, the group total loss was 2,030 pounds! Best achievers in each chapter were recognized; enjoyed a Then and Now parade (members showing clothing before their weight loss) and honoured our KOPS for years of keeping off pounds sensibly. In Halton/Peel we have KOPS members

who have maintained their weight loss up to 38 years— what an accomplishment!

We had a special guest speaker, Dr. Justine Blainey-Broker, who herself has lost 85 pounds. She specializes in life enhancement and weight loss through chiropractic and other natural health care methods. Her topic was on the 7 Keys to Weight Loss. It was very informative and inspiring.

At the end of the day, a very special recognition was given to Diane Lancaster for her leadership as an Area Captain for 20 years and also as a KOPS who has maintained her weight loss of 33 years. Fellowship Day was another success and all who attended had a great time.

TOPS is an international non-profit, weight-loss support group founded in 1948 by Esther Manz from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. TOPS helps overweight people in attaining and maintaining their physician-prescribed weight goals through group support and fellowship. TOPS promote sensible eating through healthy lifestyle changes. Once a TOPS member has reached their goal weight, they become a KOPS (Keep Off Pounds Sensibly) and actively help other members achieve their goals through encouragement and advice.

TOPS chapters are open to any person over the age of seven, who wish to have support in the goal of losing weight. Non-members are invited to attend a meeting in their area to learn about the TOPS program and friendly support, before deciding to join. Meetings are usually one hour, once per week. For more information, please visit the website at www.tops.org or by calling the toll free number 1-800-932-8677; and locally Diane Lancaster at 905-459-2363 to find a chapter near you.

—By Sandra McCoy, TOPS

ChildSafe course offered

Canadian Red Cross ChildSafe and Infant/Child CPR course will be held Tuesdays, Nov. 1 and Nov. 8, or on Mondays, Nov. 21, and Nov 28, 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Ontario Early Years Centre, 96 Guelph St., Georgetown. (Parking is located off Maple Ave. behind the post office parking lot.) The cost is \$75 per person or \$100 per couple. The two evening course (six hours) will include group discussions, demonstrations and lots of hands-on practice. To register call Catherine, 905-877-4490, Canadian Red Cross authorized provider.



Take care of your eyes

An eye exam is more than a sight test

We've all heard the adage "you get what you pay for," and this is particularly true when it comes to your vision. October is Eye Health Month and optometrists want you to know the facts about eye health and to take a moment to think about what your vision means to you.

Comprehensive eye examinations are essential. Only optometrists and ophthalmologists have the training, instrumentation and expertise to diagnose eye disease and vision problems.

A sight test only checks the refractive status of your eye to determine a prescription for eyeglasses. On the other hand, a comprehensive eye examination, from a qualified eye care practitioner, will obtain an accurate eyeglass prescription along with ensuring that your eye health has been thoroughly assessed.

Many people believe that vision loss is a natural part of aging. In fact, almost 75 per cent of vision loss is preventable. Many ocular diseases, such as cataracts and chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, can change the refractive status of

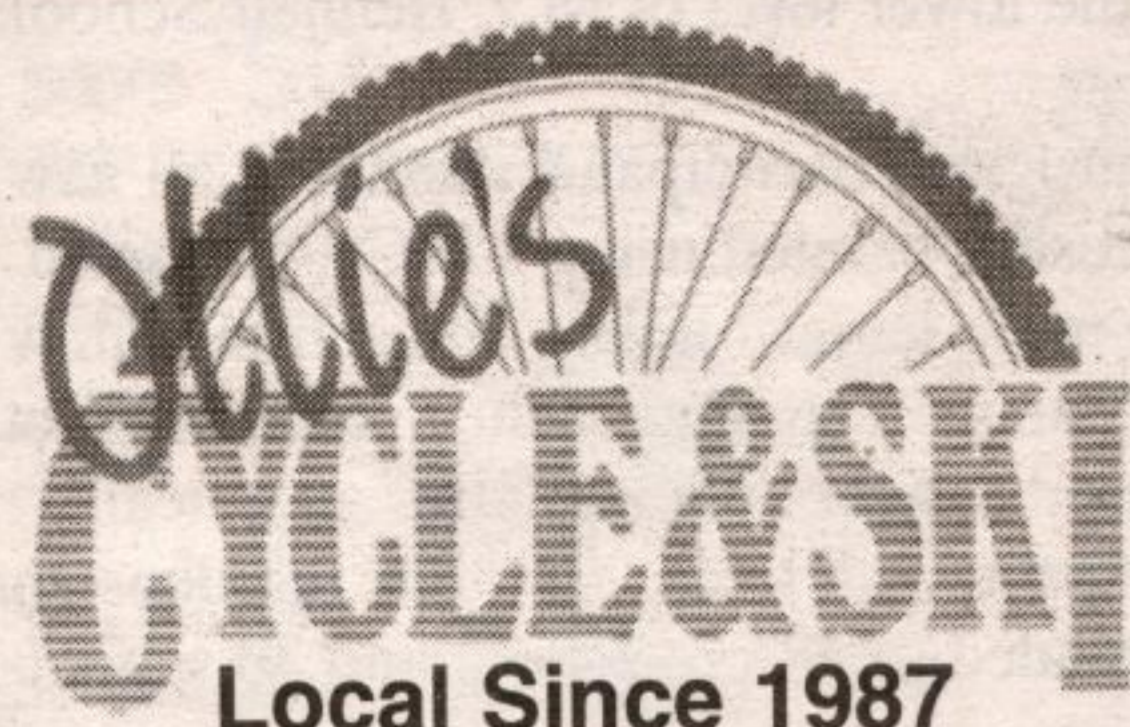
your eyes. Only through a comprehensive eye examination can a proper diagnosis and treatment plan be obtained. In this way, you can be sure that you have made the correct choice in helping to reduce your chances of permanent vision loss and maintaining your quality of life.

Individuals without vision loss should also consider obtaining a comprehensive eye examination. Conditions such as glaucoma and macular degeneration often manifest no symptoms until irreversible damage has already occurred.

Eye exams are covered under OHIP for seniors 65 and over, children 19 and under, and those with medical conditions like diabetes which can lead to vision problems.

Don't be blindsided by the quick fix. Preserve your sight—don't confuse an incomplete "sight test" with the comprehensive eye examination provided by your optometrist.

Courtesy of Dr. Bruce Foley, Dr. Ben Giddens and Dr. Caroline Teske, who are members of the Ontario Association of Optometrists with optometry practices located in Georgetown.



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