

'Slide for Sight' promises thrill

By Rebecca Ring

Meghan Vanderyt does not let an eye disease slow her down. In fact, she will be zooming down a snow tube run in Eden Mills on Monday as she and her family host a fundraiser for the Foundation for Fighting Blindness. On February 16, all are invited to take a run (or several) down an exciting snow slide at 65 River Glen Path, off Wellington Cty. Rd. 29, from noon until 4 p.m.

Mike Hession built the snow tube run ten years ago on his property and has been improving on it ever since. He lends it out to various groups like the Boy Scouts and charitable organizations. Bring a sports helmet. Meghan's father, Bill Vanderyt, says he found the snow tube run "pretty exciting and challenging – it made me scream!"

The Rockwood teen was diagnosed with a degenerative eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa two years ago when she was only 11 years old. She took action that very year to help raise awareness and funds for research. With the help of friends and family, she has so far raised \$15,500. This year she hopes to raise a total of \$10,000.

Last summer, The Beer Store raised \$7,500 in her name for the Foundation for Fighting Blindness in their annual golf tournament, which gives her a great head start in reaching her goal.

Retinitis pigmentosa is a slow progressive, degenerative



SLIDE FOR SIGHT: Meghan Vanderyt (shown in back) is hosting a day of fun and thrills at this snow tube run in Eden Mills on Monday, Feb. 16. All funds raised go to Foundation Fighting Blindness. - Submitted Photo

erative eye disease, which begins with loss of night vision, then peripheral vision, until only tunnel vision is left. According to her father, Meghan now has 40-degree vision compared to the average of 180 degrees. In darkness, she is essentially blind; "She has never seen the stars," he says.

However, a cure may be just around the corner. Vanderyt says a new treatment is currently being researched that has cured mice and dogs in the lab, and is now being tested on humans.

The Foundation for Fighting Blindness has contributed immensely to this research with their annual

"Ride for Sight" fundraiser. The Vanderyts will contribute 100% of any funds raised to this initiative.

"This is our small thing to help them help her," says Vanderyt.

For more information on the event or how to donate, e-mail billvanderyt@cogeco.ca.

The businesses on these pages support the Heart & Stroke Foundation annual appeal to find a cure for heart disease.

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Monday, February 16, 2009

From 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 28, 2008

From 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 5, 2008

From 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Visit the REMBA website at

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