

Pam runs her heart out for Terry

By Roy Downs
Terry Fox's courageous cross-Canada run for cancer has inspired many Canadians to dig deep for donations to the cause. Some have done more than just give dollars, they have put themselves out in a personal way to raise funds for the Marathon of Hope which Terry, unfortunately, was unable to finish.

Pamela Knudson, a 13-year-old Gr. 8 student at Brookville School, is one of those who "went the extra mile." Pam ran 17 extra miles, all alone, and raised a whopping \$2,355 for the cancer fund in a self-imposed personal marathon Saturday, Sept. 13.

Her exhausting run, and the just as exhausting behind-the-scenes work of her mother Sheila Knudson, has resulted in the pair raising 10 per cent of the goal Milton and District Cancer Society has set for Milton. Marathon of Hope chairman John Stewart wants every man, woman and child in Milton to give a dollar, so the town can record a \$23,000 gift.

Pam's gruelling 17-mile run has covered one-tenth of that total, now it's up to the other 22,988 of us to raise the remaining dollars.

Pam Knudson is not a long-distance runner. She doesn't profess to be an expert, or have any more substance than the rest of us.

She told The Champion she had heard about Terry Fox's campaign, but didn't pay much attention until he reached Ontario and the media picked up on his super-human effort. When Terry had to halt his marathon after doctors discovered he had lung cancer, she felt determined to do something to help.

Pam runs at school, and competes in track and field events. She decided to stage her own personal run for Terry, and for cancer. That weekend she went to McDonald's Restaurant, picked up a pledge form and decided to try a 50 km (31-mile) run around the rural roads between her Town Line home and Campbellville. Alone, she canvassed the neighborhood for sponsors,

and filled her pledge sheet within a few days.

"I just felt I had to do more for him, I decided to run. And I wanted to do it on my own," the teenager said. She didn't even tell her teacher or anyone at school, for fear they would laugh at her for such grandiose plans.

At that point her mother Sheila got involved, and the project mushroomed. Mrs. Knudson figured she could raise a lot more money, if she could canvass local business firms on Pam's behalf. It took most of a week, but Mrs. Knudson contacted over 100 companies, in person and by telephone, and filled up a dozen more pledge sheets. Mrs. Knudson had also been following Terry's run, and admitted she was "pretty miffed" when she heard his cross-Canada effort was cancelled.

"I canvass this area every year for the Cancer Society," she said. "All charities are worthwhile, but cancer touches each and every one of us." She said she has seen friends and relatives die from it, and called it "a devastating disease."

"Everyone thought I was crazy — they all said I couldn't do 31 miles," Pam said later. But the plucky teenager, only five foot one and weighing in at 100 pounds, was determined to put forth a good personal effort.

The day of the scheduled run, the rains came down. Pam had a cold, a bad one, but she'd made up her mind to run, and run she did.

With her mother following in the family car, festooned with signs and stocked with orange juice and cough candies, the girl set out to do her 31-mile trudge.

It was a continuous drizzle for the first hour and a half, but she ran on. The pair stopped at Mohawk Inn, Campbellville, to rest. Mrs. Knudson passed the donation box, and patrons and staff contributed \$10. Someone suggested they visit the neighboring Mohawk Raceway and tour the barns, where grooms were working with the horses.



Run for cancer. Thirteen-year-old Pam Knudson ran 14 miles and collected \$2,355 for the Terry Fox cancer fund.

"We toured the barns, all eight of them, and those people were just fantastic," Mrs. Knudson said. "A lot of them were just kids, and they gave us what they had. One young man gave us 50 cents, he said it was his coffee money but he decided to go without that day."

One horseman joked, "My horse won't even run in the rain today, what's the matter with you?" That seemed to lift Pam's sagging spirits, and she continued on with the run.

It wasn't until they got home, hours later, that the Knudsons counted the money from the race track, which totalled a generous \$370.

Mrs. Knudson called the experience very heart-warming. Again, Pam set off running. She wore a track suit, with a "Terry Fox Ten Million Dollar Run" T-shirt over it, and a scarf around her neck to protect her sore throat. She avoided the orange

juice, but kept sucking on cough candies. "I coughed and sneezed all the time." The wind blew raw and cold.

The rain continued, but so did Pam. Finally, halfway home from Campbellville, her mother decided the little runner had had enough, and insisted she quit. Reluctantly, Pam agreed. She had gone 17 miles.

"I was tired, and I was cold," Pam admitted. "Really, I was completely exhausted. I felt I could lie down on the side of the road and go to sleep."

Mrs. Knudson drove her home for a bath, some hot soup, and spent the rest of the day relaxing and watching TV. "She was still pretty high, feeling pretty good about it all," her mother chimed in.

The day's effort was expected to produce \$1,900, and her father Donald Knudson agreed to put in \$100 to round it off at an even \$2,000. But more money came in than the Knudsons expected, and most of the merchants paid their full pledge, as if Pam had completed the 31 miles.

Mrs. Knudson spent most of the next few days out collecting the pledges, and thanking the sponsors. The total grew to \$2,205 and Mr. Knudson upped his pledge to \$150, to bring the total to \$2,355.

Ironically, Pam was disobeying doctors' orders when she set out to run for Terry Fox. She has a bothersome knee and makes regular visits to a chiropractor. She did the full run wearing an elastic bandage on the leg and it was the leg, as much as the wind, rain and her cold, that forced the run to end sooner than planned.

Pam had spent five hours on the road, about half that time on the run, the remainder helping with collections at the race track and at the rest stop. But it was a learning experience for her, that trip through the horse barns, where she found the young people really relate to Terry Fox and were anxious to help anyone who was working for the same goal.

"It was an experience she will never forget," said her mother. "Now she has an idea of what Terry Fox went through."

The following day, Pam wanted to go to the high school and join the McDonald's run around the school track, which attracted over 60 Terry Fox supporters. But her cold was worse, understandably, and she had laryngitis. Her mother refused to let her leave

the house, except to go to church.

The Knudsons went to a Cancer Society meeting last Tuesday night, where they were warmly praised for their outstanding contributions to the cause. Pam has volunteered to help the Society by selling buttons for the Fox fund, this Saturday at Milton Fair.

Mrs. Knudson said she gave out official receipts to over 100 business firms which honored their pledges. She stressed the money is all earmarked for the Milton branch of the Cancer Society. She sure kept John Stewart busy signing receipts, she laughed. But John was happy to oblige, as the money just kept pouring in.

In retrospect, Pam would like to do it again sometime. "I do hope there will be another run, I would do it over again from the beginning, alone if necessary," she assured this reporter.

"I still feel I haven't done enough, I want to do more if I can."

Her mother recalls it was a wonderful experience and a good lesson in human nature. "As a team, we did pretty well," she said.

She admitted she worked hard collecting pledges and donations. When the whole episode began, "all I saw was the courage on that boy's (Fox's) face, that determination." When his run drew to a hasty close, she

recalled the pain on Terry's face.

While Pam was out running in the rain, she saw "a lonely little girl, my daughter, running her heart out. I could relate then to what Terry Fox was going through, and I was just as determined to carry it through."

One of the heart-warming things that happened, was that some business firms gave more than they pledged, and others which had at first refused (many said they had already given to the Fox fund and couldn't give again) changed their minds, after Pam's run, and sent in donations.

The Cancer Society received several donations last week, in Pam's name, from firms which either hadn't been contacted, or had earlier politely declined to support her.

Oddly enough, Pam and her mother had tried to do their run quietly, without any publicity. But word got out, and the newspapers beat a path to their door to write about the girl they described as "gutsy", "brave", "dogged" and "hero".

At first, the Knudsons refused an interview with The Champion, claiming they did what they did for Terry Fox and the Cancer Fund, not for publicity.

But they relented when local Cancer Society officials revealed the

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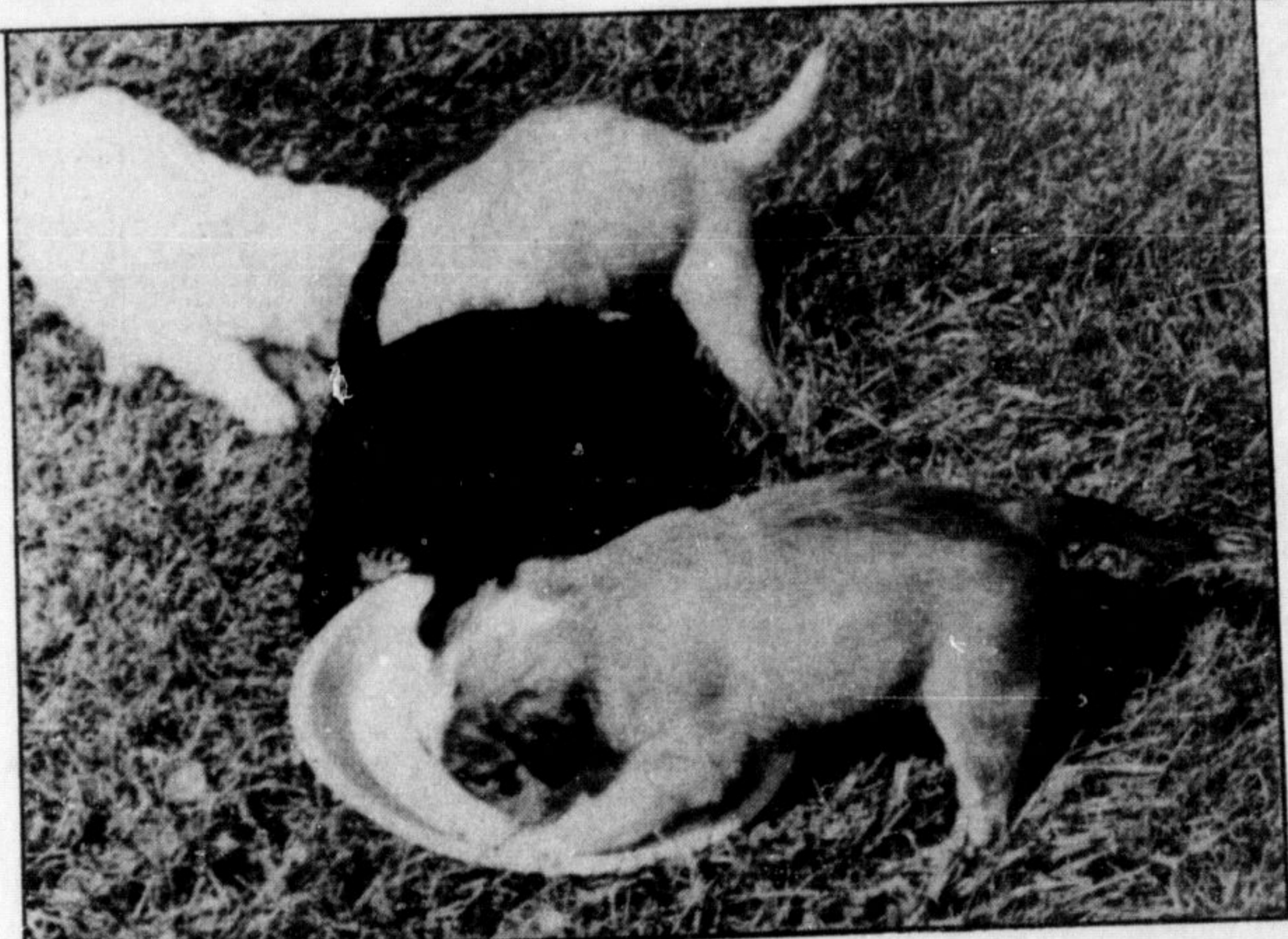
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Milton Ontario



Chow time in puppyland

Manners don't count, it's speed that means the difference between eating well and going hungry. Especially if you're one of six puppy brothers and sisters, and there's only one plate of porridge. Buttons, a six-year-old cross between a Spaniel and a Poodle, who lives with the Ford Wicksons of Trafalgar Rd., a month ago gave birth to a litter of 11 puppies. Six are left and food time is fun time as the cute pups wallow in the dish in their anxiety to clean out every last drop.

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