



# Champion COMMUNITY Page

## Raspberry's courage makes her perfect candidate to serve as Terry's Teammate

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

It has been 20 years since Terry Fox emblazoned his name across the Canadian landscape through his Marathon of Hope.

And nine years prior to that cross-Canada jag, Milton's Sheila Raspberry lost her leg to cancer. She was 23 at the time.

"My knee just bothered me," recalled Ms Raspberry, who will act as the Terry's Teammate for this year's fundraising run. "One morning I got up and couldn't put any weight on it."

In short order, she was diagnosed with Osteogenic Sarcoma, or bone cancer — the same cancer which would take Terry's life in 1981.

"This was tumour, a growth on the bone," said Ms Raspberry. "The only cure was removing my leg."

Milton's Terry Fox Run will take place Sunday, Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at E.C. Drury High School.

Opening ceremonies and a warm-up will begin at 10 a.m. and the event will be followed by a barbecue by Quality Greens, a DJ, live band, face-painting for kids and loads of prizes.

Last year, the event raised \$37,000, placing Milton in the top 20 of Ontario contributors.

Pledge forms are now available at banks and drug stores. And volunteer clowns, children's entertainers and face painters are needed. If interested, call Kim or Craig Thomas at 878-1206.

After Ms Raspberry's operation, she fought to cope with the loss.

"I thought 'Oh, my God, my life is over.' But I knew it had to be done," said Ms Raspberry. "It was the only way to save my life. You just figure you have to pick up the pieces and see what happens."

What happened to Ms Raspberry is what happens to most of us, if we're lucky enough.

She met and married a man named Steve soon after the operation. They've been together 27 years now.

"He has known me no other way," said Ms Raspberry. "I know he married me because he loved me."

Together they raised a son and a daughter, Kale, 22, and Kristen, 21.

In between, Ms Raspberry dedicated her time to helping out various charities, community



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Sheila Raspberry, who lost her leg to cancer, has been chosen as Terry's Teammate for Milton's Terry Fox Run September 17.

events and organizations, such as the Milton District Hospital Auxiliary, the Milton Fall Fair, Girl Guides and Curling for Cancer.

Despite this, she was shocked when the call came in from Terry Fox Run organizers requesting that she be this year's team member — or local face promoting the event.

"My first thought was there has to be someone more deserving," she said.

If Ms Raspberry has managed to make the most of her years since the operation by living well, her removed leg may also have done some good.

"They sent parts of my leg all over the world for research," she said.

At that time, Ms Raspberry left the hospital with a prosthesis firmly in place. But today she's more comfortable just hanging out on crutches.

"I just find it easier," she said.

That means she often finds herself an object of fascination for children, who may not have seen a one-legged woman breezily whizzing by them before.

"I don't shy away from going out and it opens a lot of people's eyes," said Ms Raspberry. "Some of the kids are really funny and others just stand back."

Either way, she tries to make them feel more comfortable.

"If they're old enough I explain I had cancer," said Ms Raspberry. "If they aren't, I just say my leg got sick and they couldn't make me better without removing it."

To this day, Ms Raspberry isn't sure what caused the cancer to form in the first place.

But she thinks if she were diagnosed in

today's climate of increased knowledge, she'd still have her leg.

"Apparently they do bone grafts now, they don't remove the limb," she said. "They've come a long way in 29 years."

Since that time, Ms Raspberry has twice had malignant tumours in the small of her back removed.

And to this day, she struggles with phantom pain in the limb that hasn't been there for close to three decades.

"The first time I had it, I freaked," said Ms Raspberry. "You always have the sensation of the foot being there."

To date, the Terry Fox Run has raised \$250 million for cancer research world-wide.

The funds are distributed by the National Cancer Institute of Canada.

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### COGECO 14 Programming Schedule — September 5th, 2000 - September 11th, 2000

**Tuesday, September 5th**

10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In!  
Encore  
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!  
6:00pm Hands up Puppeteers  
7:00pm War Amps: Spot The Danger  
8:00pm Milton Ambassador Competition

**Wednesday, September 6th**

10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In!  
Encore  
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!  
6:00pm Cable in the Classroom  
7:00pm Down To Earth  
8:00pm Milton Council, August 28th

**Thursday, September 7th**

10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In!  
Encore  
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!  
6:00pm Watercolour Workshop  
7:00pm Money Week  
8:00pm Fergus Highland  
Games Tattoo

**Monday, September 11th**

10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In!  
Encore  
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!  
6:00pm Living on the Edge  
7:00pm The Issue Is...  
8:00pm To Be Announced

Feature this week: Milton Ambassador Competition - Tuesday, 8 pm