



Champion COMMUNITY Page

Local citizens young and old ready to shave heads in support of cancer-stricken woman

By STEPHANIE THIESSEN

The Champion

If there's anyone who understands the power that arises when one small town stands united for a cause, it's Clem Scholtz.

In 1996, Milton was the scene of the biggest single family bone marrow clinic in North America, held to find a match for Mr. Scholtz's daughter, Deidre, who was five years old at the time. More than 2,000 Miltonians turned out.

"It was an incredible turnout, to say the very least," he said, adding that after the event, the town continued to demonstrate its support in fundraisers held to ease the financial burden of Deidre's illness, aplastic anemia.

Now, he said, it's time to do it again.

On April 12 from 1 to 4 p.m., a fundraiser will be held outside at 393 Main St. E. for Miltonian Sarah Burt, 20, who was diagnosed two months ago with Myelofibrosis, a rare form of bone marrow cancer. The event will include entertainment for kids and adults, and people — including Milton firefighters — will shave their heads to raise money for Ms Burt.

"This is another opportunity for Milton to show the world what it's all about. Sarah and her family need the community to step up and say 'We're here for you,'" Mr. Scholtz said, adding that he and Deidre, now 12, will lend support to Ms Burt in any way she needs it and encourage Milton residents to do the same.

Money raised will go toward Ms Burt's medical costs. Expenses may include a wig, naturopathic treatments and travelling costs. All funds left over will go to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Last October, Ms Burt, 20, gave birth to a still-born baby. On that day, doctors noticed that Ms Burt's Hemoglobin levels were drastically low. Many tests and check-ups followed. On February 6 — the day the baby was due — Ms Burt was officially diagnosed with Myelofibrosis.

The idea behind the fundraiser is that people will collect pledges before the event and then shave their heads at the event.

Event gaining momentum

"Some people have raised \$1,000 in one afternoon. It's going to be huge," said Tarah Cherwoniak, Ms Burt's sister and the organizer of the fundraiser.

Before and after photos will be provided to every head shaving participant, as well as t-shirts. Some of the women taking part have long hair that will be donated to Locks of Love, an organization that makes wigs for patients with illnesses that cause a loss of hair.

The event will be a great time for everyone, whether or not they want to shave their heads, Ms Cherwoniak said, adding that donations can also be made that day.

The afternoon will include a deejay, face painting and balloons for the kids, and plenty of entertainment. There will also be a half pipe brought in for skateboard and in-line skating buffs.

One of the things Ms Cherwoniak said she's most excited about is the booth that will have information for people to take on how to get on the bone marrow registry.



Sarah Burt holds scissors and clippers while surrounded by firefighters (from left) Jody Rowley, Steve Ellis, Mike Clouston and Andrew Brassard in preparation for an April 12 Shave Your Head For Cancer event at 393 Main St. E. (outside Communication Zone) in support of the local woman, who's been diagnosed with cancer. Many individuals and businesses have jumped on board to help with the event.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

"One thing I've learned is that nobody seems to know how," Ms Cherwoniak said.

Pamphlets and educated volunteers should help fix that, she said.

"I really want to bring more awareness to bone marrow cancer. Only 30 per cent of Canadians who are diagnosed have matches in their families."

Ms Burt is lucky — it seems one of her sisters will be a match.

Ms Cherwoniak said she thinks the fundraiser and the community's support is helping to make Ms Burt stronger — and she's not the only one.

"I couldn't imagine sitting and doing nothing," Ms Cherwoniak said.

Ms Burt, who has lived in Milton for almost five years, said she's really surprised at the outpouring of support from Miltonians.

"I don't think I make that much of an impact," she said, laughing. "I think nobody knows who I am."

She said she feels somewhat divided about the upcoming event. "It should be fun, but I'll feel odd — like everybody's looking

at me. I'm not used to so much attention."

Ms Burt will probably be undergoing chemotherapy next month, and then doctors will attempt the bone marrow transplant.

Mike Clouston, an acting captain with the Milton Fire Department, knows from experience just how important it is to have the support of family and community when going through any sort of health crisis. He was diagnosed with cancer a year-and-a-half ago and underwent radiation treatment.

Mr. Clouston is getting a group of firefighters together who are willing to shave their heads for the cause. A financial burden is the last thing Ms Burt needs to face right now, Mr. Clouston said.

Milton firefighters did a similar thing a few years ago for Camp Trillium, a camp for children with cancer, he said.

He urges Miltonians to get involved in any way they can. "It's a good cause — it's a person in our community. For Camp Trillium, nobody knew the (children) but this one is more personal. We know Sarah and her family."

For more information, call Ms Cherwoniak at (905) 510-6888.

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COGECO 14

Programming Schedule — Tuesday, April 1st - Monday, April 7th, 2003

Tuesday, April 1		Wednesday, April 2		Thursday, April 3		Sunday, April 6		Monday, April 7	
5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Early Week Edition	5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Early Week Edition	5 & 6pm	Plugged In! Early Week Edition	5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Late Week Edition	5, 6 & 7:30pm	Plugged In! Late Week Edition
5:30pm	Seniors Showcase	5:30pm	Kid Connection	5:30pm	Osler Health Connection	5:30pm	Faces Dolmage/Sladek	5:30pm	The issue is...
6:30pm	Optimist TV Bingo (Live)	6:30pm	Swap Talk (Live)	6:30pm	Main Street	6:30pm	Seniors Showcase	6:30pm	Faces Carpenter/Lewis
8:00pm	Halton Hills Council (Mar 31)	8:00pm	Auto Experts (Live)	8:00pm	Halton Region Council (Mar 26)	7:00pm	Osler Health Connection	7:00pm	Money Week
		9:00pm	Milton Council (Mar 24)			8:00pm	Main Street	8:00pm	SportsZONE Live
								9:00pm	Cogeco Sports: BCW - Border City Wrestling