

Stroke victims learn to cope

A group to help stroke victims and their families understand and cope with their disability is being set up in York Region. Elizabeth Groves, a Richmond Hill resident who has worked at York Central Hospital for 15 years, said she has seen a real need for a group such as this in the Thornhill and Richmond Hill area.

7:30 p.m. the first meeting will be held at Don Head Secondary School on Major Mackenzie Drive in Richmond Hill.

Meetings will be held once each month and at this first meeting a representative from the association for Ontario will speak about the organization and how families can help stroke victims cope.

Tuesday, January 30 at

Principals seek ways to explain PA days

More than 100 of York Region's elementary and secondary school principals swooped down on Vaughan's Kortright Centre for Conservation last Wednesday for a conference designed to help them improve public relations skills in promoting professional activity days.

The benefits of the workshop won't be known until at least the next professional activity (PA) day or later, and according to Superintendent of Education Walter Willms, it's possible they may never be known.

"It's often difficult to measure the good things that result from these workshops. If there is an improvement in the way our principals handle public concern over subsequent PA days it could be because our activities today were effective or it could be for other reasons," said Mr. Willms.

While he and his staff will evaluate the day, he said no conscious effort will be made to compare responses of the public to professional activities or their concepts from different PA days.

Last week's all-day session had a different twist added to it. Education reporters from a half-dozen community newspapers were invited to participate in small-group discussions with principals and senior staff.

Early in the agenda, principals also heard two short presentations on the use of the media as a public relations tool for schools — one from Don Bernard of The Banner in Aurora and another from Steve Pearlstein of The Liberal in Richmond Hill.

The first part of the morning was devoted to a lecture on communications theory, by Professor M.P. Cowles of York University. Perceptions of the public were given by Georgina Trustee Audrey Hall, and Newmarket Trustee Craig Cribar, who was chairman of the PA Day committee, explained how the idea of the workshop was conceived as part of an overall board plan.

The 10 groups of principals, staff and media representatives met three times during the day and tried to come up with some constructive comments and better methods to promote public understanding of the need for PA days.

One group, which had Director of Education Sam Chapman as a participant, intermittently discussed the inconvenience to parents PA days cause because of the lack of baby-sitting arrangements.

After all the approaches to related problems were aired and the principals recognized the need for more effective communications, talk invariably reverted to what parents can or should do with their children on PA days.

"You can put the nicest looking steak dinner in front of a man but if he has a toothache, there's no way you'll be able to sell it to him," said Mr. Chapman. "What you have to do is get rid of the toothache, in this case the inconvenience related to the baby-sitting problem and then address the idea of promoting PA days."

Among the two-page list of suggestions this group of principals submitted, was asking (not telling) parents and others to participate in the planning of activities for children on PA days; omitting high-profile errors, which they felt are lethal in terms of public impressions; focussing on needs common to both teacher and parent, since it is now seen as meeting the needs of the teacher only; developing a positive image of the school and through a climate of trust the need for PA days could be more easily understood.

During the day's wrap-up, principals were told the board is not legally responsible for providing baby-sitting services.

However, the PA day action plan passed by the board last August assured various schools in York would become models for particular PA days and provide custodial services for children.

If the pilot program is successful this year, it will likely be expanded.

The next PA day is February 23 (county-wide) and if you begin to feel smothered in newsletters and explanations, you'll know it's all in the name of understanding PA days.

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More Wintario \$\$\$ for York

Another 20 projects in York Region have cashed in on Wintario grants, to the tune of \$32,301.

They include the following:

The Ontario Registered Music Teachers' Association in Richmond Hill will use a grant of \$1,238 to assist with the purchase of office equipment.

A grant of \$953 will be made to the Richvale Minor Ball Association in Richmond Hill to share in the costs of softball equipment for 18 teams.

To the Richmond Hill District Minor Soccer Club will go a \$720 grant to defray the costs of sending two teams to participate in an invitational tournament in Chatham, New Jersey.

Mary-Elizabeth Manley of Richmond Hill will receive a grant of \$208 to assist with her career development in dance.

The Society for the Preservation of Historical Thornhill will use a grant of \$1,000 to share in the costs of hosting "Heritage Day Festival".

A grant of \$1,267 will be made to the Estonian Girl Guides in Canada based in Thornhill to defray costs of attending the Estonian Girl Guides Jamboree "Koguja II" in Lakewood, New Jersey.

The Thornhill Softball League will use a grant of \$1,410 to aid in the purchase of softball equipment and trophies.

The Coachmen Drum Corps in Keswick will use a grant of \$7,975 to defray the cost of uniforms.

A grant of \$5,000 will be made to the Toronto and District Caledonia Pipe Band in Aurora to assist with expenses to attend the Pipe Band Championships in Scotland.

The Newmarket Rays Fastball Club will receive a grant of \$3,594 to defray travel expenses to attend the Senior Men's National Championships in St. John, New Brunswick.

A grant of \$2,774 will go to the Newmarket Minor Soccer Club to help with the purchase of soccer equipment.

The Toronto Polo Club located in Buttonville will receive a grant of \$1,602 to defray expenses to attend the North American Interscholastic Championships at Pebble Beach, California.

A grant of \$1,123 will go to the Markham Softball Association to assist with the purchase of trophies, plaques and crests.

The Unionville Tennis Club will receive a grant of \$829 to share in the purchase of tennis equipment and trophies.

The Aurora Community Tennis Club will use a grant of \$502 to assist with the costs of purchasing tennis equipment and trophies.

The 748 Royal Canadian (Army) Cadet Corps in Markham will receive a grant of \$461 to assist with the purchase of camping equipment.

A grant of \$381 will go to the Markham Men's Fun League to assist with the purchase of trophies.

The Aurora Minor Hockey Association will use a grant of \$263 to share in the cost of awards.

A grant of \$250 will be made to the King City Junior Parent-Teacher Committee to defray costs of constructing a playground at the Eva L. Dennis Public School.

A grant of \$30 will be made to the Town of Aurora to assist with the purchase of awards.

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