

'Horse sports' held at McGregor equestrian centre

BY ANDY COMBER

There was a great deal of whooping, hollering and laughter at the Bar-RK Equestrian Centre March 4 during a horse and rider sporting event, "Team Sorting Cowboys", at their facility near McGregor.

"We both enjoy it or we would not be here," said Gerrie Kenney, who "pulled out of retirement" with her husband John, to help their daughter Sharon Ridley, owner and operator of the Bar-RK, with the equestrian centre.

"There are three generations here," said Kenney, speaking of the centre's principal riding instructor, her granddaughter 22-year-

old Gerrie Donaldson.

"I guess it is in the blood," she said.

Donaldson said she was inspired by a great uncle, Hank Rudosky, who was renowned for his horsemanship in 100 Mile House, B.C.

"He preferred horses over cars because, as he said, horses don't get flat tires," said Donaldson, who has a life-long love of horses, which led to equestrian studies at Kemptville College.

Donaldson said that the team sorting event is derived from actual ranch work, where a rider must separate a specific cow from a herd. Tom and Carolyn Menier bring the cows and

organize the local event.

Team sorting has a team of three riders, who must work with a herd of five cows, each wearing a numbered scarf. The first rider of the team separates a specific cow, working with teammates to manoeuvre each cow over a foul line. The fastest time among the teams determines the winner.

"There is much whooping, hollering and laughter during the competition, from competitors and spectators, alike," said Donaldson.

Individual skills are demonstrated in another event called penning, where the rider singles out a cow from the herd and directs the animal into a pen.

Bar-RK trains, sells and boards horses, and provides beginner and advanced lessons for children age 6 and up, and to adults of all ages.

"It is a great experience, whether you want to be competitive or just learn to ride for fun," said Donaldson.

The public is invited to attend future team sorting events at the Bar-RK, scheduled for Apr. 8 and 22, May 27, June 24, July 29, and Aug. 26. Registration to participate begins at 11 a.m. for a 12 p.m. start.

Bar-RK is located at 2043 Tremblay Side Road, north off Gesto Road, just south-east of McGregor.



Local horse riding instructor Gerrie Donaldson takes part in a team sorting event March 4 at the Bar-RK Equestrian Centre near McGregor.



ROCK 'N ROLL – Leamington rock band The Drowning perform at the Essex Community Centre in a live rock show Saturday night. The band was one of five local bands presented by The Musical Majority. Photo: Andy Comber

2007 Apple Festival kicks off with mini-golf

The Ruthven Apple Festival Mini-Golf Tournament recently held at Colasanti's Tropical Gardens in Ruthven raised a total of \$3,000 in support of people with intellectual disabilities.

A total of 62 golfers hit the mini-putt links at Colasanti's with the team of Stan and Lauren Vickery and Gerald and Eleanor Wilkinson of Kingsville winning the prize for team low score.

"We are very thankful to

all of the local businesses that have so generously provided us with corporate sponsorships and donated prizes," stated Tony DeSantis, manager of community relations with Community Living Essex County.

The 2007 Ruthven Apple Festival is scheduled to take place on Saturday, Sept. 29 and Sunday, Sept. 30 at Colasanti's Tropical Gardens and will again feature a parade, the popular Farmer's Market and

more than 100 food and craft vendors. Organizers are looking for volunteers to assist with the 2007 festival. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Tony DeSantis at 519-776-6483, ext. 246.

All proceeds from the Ruthven Apple Festival benefit Community Living Essex County, an organization that supports over 500 people with an intellectual disability and their families.

Walk for MS looking for participants

Organizers were on hand at the Real Canadian Superstore in Leamington Friday to promote the kick-off event for the Super Cities Walk for Multiple Sclerosis taking place April 15.

It's the fourth year the event is being held in Leamington.

Jackie Putterman, special events co-ordinator for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada Ontario Division, said she is expecting about 300 people to come out and

participate in the walk.

Proceeds from the event will go toward local client services, research, public education, clinics, chapter resources and administration and fundraising.

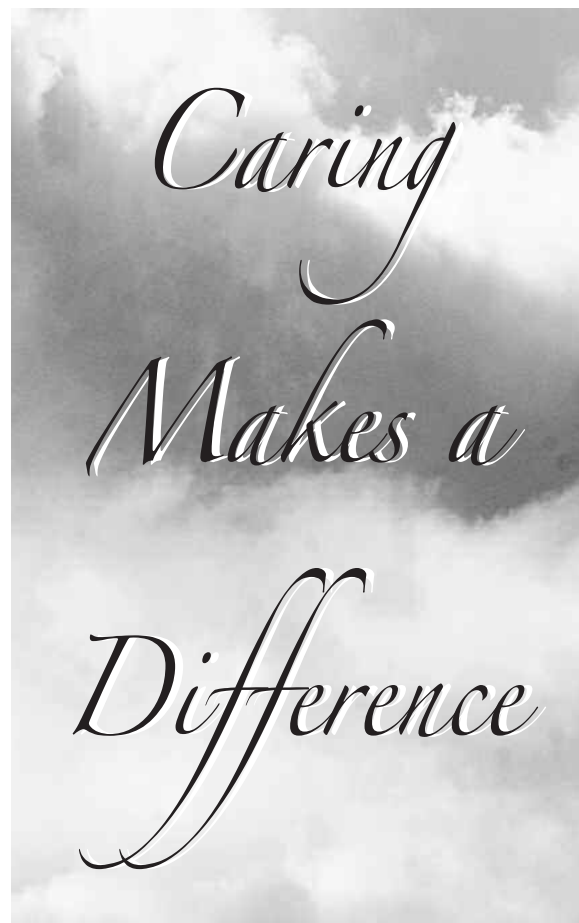
About one in every 500 Canadians has multiple sclerosis, a chronic disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. Every day, three people are diagnosed with the disease.

Last year, the MSSC approved more than \$4.5

million to fund 13 projects, "targeted at finding ways to repair the damage that MS causes and in stopping MS attacks," said national medical advisor Dr. William McIlroy in a news release.

The walk will start at 10 a.m. at the Kinsmen Recreation Complex at 249 Sherk Street in Leamington.

For more information on how to register, call 1-888-510-7777 or register online at www.supercitieswalk.com.



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