

Local MS chapter planning car rally

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, York East Chapter, will be holding a car rally, A Pursuit on Wheels on Saturday, June 18 beginning at 10 a.m.

The car rally will be held at the Markham Fairgrounds. The rally will be followed by an awards

presentation at 7:30 p.m. and a dance at 8:30 p.m.

Last year the rally had a net profit of \$9,100. The goal for this year is \$13,000.

The registration fee per car is \$20. Pledge sheets will be provided. Substantial prizes will be given out based on five categories.

Rugmakers extraordinaire

By KATE GILDERDALE
 Many of the beautiful rugs sold at Stouffville's Care and Share Shoppe are made by Mary Drudge and her brother Carl.

Their involvement in rug making started by chance.

"Carl and I have worked at the Care and Share Shoppe since it opened," Mary explains. A lot of the second-hand clothing they received was not in saleable condition and they didn't know what to do with it.

"I thought, why doesn't someone buy a loom and make some rugs," she recalls.

In 1983, Mary discussed her suggestion with Irene Steiner and Esther Reesor at the shop and they thought it was an excellent idea.

"Irene asked me if I would do it," she says. "We didn't know anything about looms — I'd never even touched one."

Mary had a friend who had owned a loom and she talked to her about the project. Her friend told her what she should buy and helped her set the loom up in the basement.

"She spent the whole day putting it together and she taught me how to put the thread on it," Mary explains. After some lessons, Mary and Carl learned how to weave rugs.

To improve their skills, Mary took a beginner's course in weaving and passed on what she had learned to Carl, who proved to be an adept pupil. Carl now does most of the weaving himself.

The task of sewing the rugs together and rolling them into balls is done by May and Esther Barkey.

"We bring the stuff from the shop, wash and dry it, and pull it apart," Mary notes. "I cut the rags and take them to May and Esther who sew them together and bring them back for weaving. We go back and show them the rugs when they are finished."

At 80 and 71 respectively, May and Esther are vital participants in creating the rugs.

"If they weren't doing this, we wouldn't be able to make them," Mary says. "I wouldn't have time to sit and sew rags. It gives them satisfaction to do it and they have lots of fun."

The rugs are made from an astonishing range of materials including denim, corduroy, neckties, pantyhose, woollen materials and sheets.

"We use anything but cotton and plastic," Mary laughs. "I can make one in an hour and a half but it takes at least another half hour to tie the ends." Mary estimates the whole process takes about three hours.

She and Carl can make two in a day, but last fall they got very busy at Christmas.

"We were making four in a day," she remembers.

Initially they were concerned that the rugs wouldn't sell.

"We thought we'd be lucky to sell 25 a year," Mary says. Actual sales have run at about 100 per year. She thinks that she and Carl have made over 500 since they started.

Mary is an accomplished dressmaker. She makes all her own clothes and Carl's as well. She also enjoys quilting, though she doesn't have time to do as much as she'd like. Carl's hobby is hooking rugs and they try to vary their activities.

"If you sew too long you get bored," she explains. "We go on to other things when we've had enough of what we're doing."

"We usually work at the shop on Mondays," Mary says. "Last Monday we could hardly open the back door to get in because of the pile of bags there."

Although the shop is closed, there is a vast amount of work to be done, sorting and pricing merchandise for the week ahead.

Mary and Carl live in Markham, not far from the farm where they grew up. Their present home was built for their 12 years ago, when the farm was expropriated by the government for the Pickering Airport.

Although it was hard to leave, it was also a relief.

"Our parents were gone," Mary comments. "We had the farm rented, which meant we had to keep fixing it up." Having the new house built gave them an exciting challenge.

They have done a lot of travelling, both in Canada and abroad.

"We were in England and Wales last year on a tour," she states. They have also been to Europe twice and have visited all the coasts in Canada as well as trips to the U.S.

They are members of the Rouge Valley Mennonite Church. Between their church involvement, their work in the Care and Share Shoppe and their weaving, they lead full and satisfying lives.

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