

Faith and medicine help teacher beat illness

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

The fight isn't over yet, but Cindy Phillips would appear to be on her way to beating a potentially ruthless opponent.

The 28-year-old Grade 5 teacher at Stouffville Christian School was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease last

September.

But following three months of chemotherapy, followed by two months of radiation treatment, the outlook is good.

"They told me at first that if I had to get cancer, this was the type to get," says Miss Phillips. "There is a 90 per-cent cure rate for this type of cancer, with little

chance of recurrence."

"They took an X-Ray after the chemotherapy, and they said it seemed to have disappeared. The treatment is so much more advanced today. One doctor told me that 30 years ago, this would have been a death sentence."

Miss Phillips claims that while she was relatively optimistic

from the outset, she had trouble accepting what had happened to her.

"It was hard to believe — you don't think this sort of thing will ever happen to you. But I guess I accepted easily that I had it."

And she has had her down times. "Discouragement sets in. It's such a long drawn-out thing and the treatment seems to have been going on for so long. You just wish you could be normal."

She says she has had tremendous support from the staff members at school, her friends, and her family. Her parents have accompanied her to each treatment and the other teachers have taken over her yard duty shift.

While the chemotherapy was a twice-monthly process, radiation treatments were administered daily, which has resulted in her teaching mornings only recently.

As for the reaction of her students to her illness, Miss Phillips says they have shown varying degrees of awareness. "It's hard to know what they think. Some are more tuned in than others. I don't look sick, so they tend to forget. I never really wanted to bring it up too much, because I thought it might scare them."

Miss Phillips claims the affliction has been a real test of her strong Christian faith and that she now has a deeper understanding of that faith.

The daughter of missionaries who raised her in the missions field in Nigeria, Miss Phillips feels her illness forced her to decide if what she had been raised to believe was fact or fiction.

"It made me look at just where I stand, to depend upon God even more. He can help in times of trouble, and He never said you wouldn't have troubles, only that He'll be with you."

She says she has people praying for her from here to Africa, due to her parents' missionary contacts. "Even people who don't know me are praying for me," she grins.

She plans to spend the summer recuperating and will spend some time out west visiting her sister. She is optimistic she will be back at Stouffville Christian School on a full-time basis come September.

And while she is still awaiting the final positive prognosis, she is confident. "Now that the radiation is over, it's wait and see. I've been optimistic, because they've



PHOTO BY BRUCE STAPLEY
Following three months of chemotherapy and two months of radiation treatment, the outlook is good for Cindy Phillips. She was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease last September.

led me to believe it will be beaten."

And she feels the whole ordeal will make her sensitive to others experiencing serious illness. "Hopefully, I can help people in the same situation and be a little more caring to people, even people who aren't sick."

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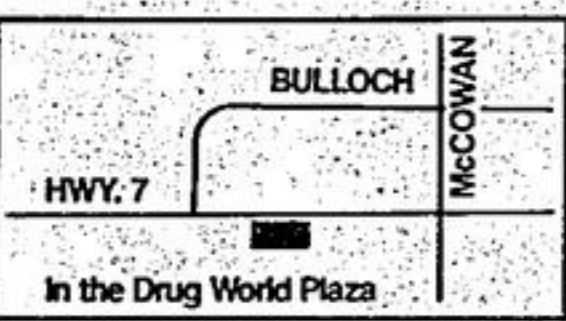
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will be held on Thursday, June 8, 1989 at 7:30 p.m.

Amendments to the Administrative By-Laws and Ratification of Medical By-Laws will be presented.

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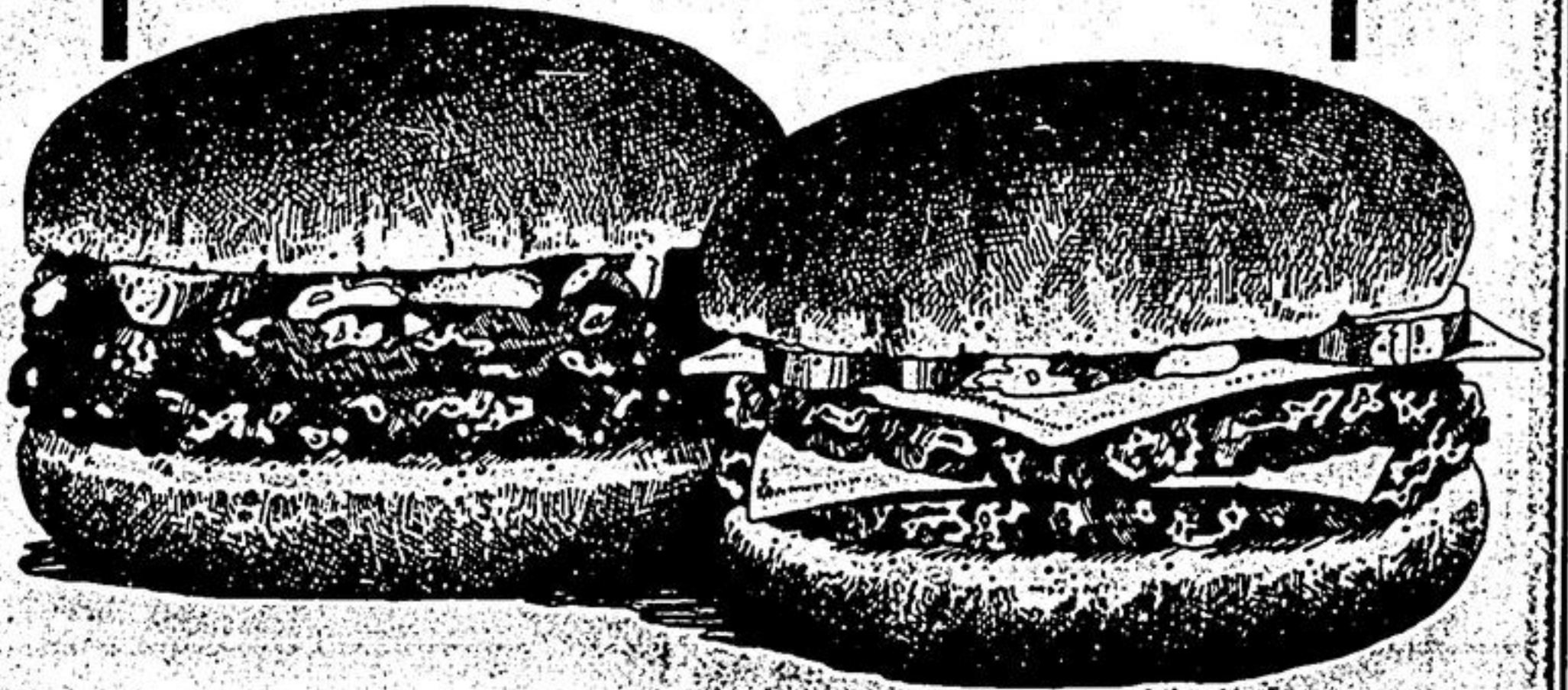
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