

Orienteering raises awareness of environmental issues

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From that point on, she was hooked. She learned to make maps, joined the board of directors and published three books about orienteering.

"It took me about four years to figure it all out but I was determined," said Mrs. Stott, who is now a certified level 3 orienteering coach. "I grew up in the 4-H club and have always followed their motto, 'Make the best better'.

"So, I got a running coach and studied the sport both in North America and Europe. I believe if you're going to do something and do it well, you have to have a program. But no matter how many times I compete or how well I do,

I still think 'Oh, my God' every time I turn over my map."

Training hard is not new to Mrs. Stott. She is also an active competitor in modern pentathlon — a sport that includes riding, swimming, shooting, fencing and running.

In an effort to bring more people into the sport of orienteering, Mrs. Stott started an adult training camp that attracted 55 people for its first session. She has also organized an annual Christmas walk for the last 21 years.

"We use a picture map and orienteering flags and basically walk and eat our way through a simple course."

She also put together the Trivia Orienteering package available at the Newmarket Library. The package

includes a map of Fairy Lake as well as trivia questions that have to be answered at each checkpoint. They are available for \$2 with proceeds going to the library.

"This is a great way to do it because it allows people to go somewhere familiar and do the course at a more leisurely pace. They can also go whenever they choose."

Mrs. Stott says many of the people who turn out for the fun walks never take the sport any further.

"That's OK," said Mrs. Stott. "Even if they never learn to read a map, it creates an awareness for the environment and maybe more people will think twice and speak up when their favourite orienteering route is about to be developed."

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