

Stouffville Says

By Joan Ransberry

Do you expect to spend a lot on back-to-school supplies and clothes?

— Asked at Giant Tiger in Stouffville

Amy HOWITT



I'm in my last year of high school. I'm not spending much. All I need is a binder and paper.

Lena KOTEVSKI



I have three children. I spent \$80 on school supplies and gave each child \$200 for clothes. It doesn't go far.

Irene NAGY



With two children, the cost of clothes is astronomical. I'll spend enough.

Stella PILLING



It's crazy. I expect to spend \$400 on one child. What ever happened to just needing pens and paper?



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

York Region residents (from left) Claudine Hubbard, Beth Egan, Debora Kelly, Sheila Clark, Darcia Jensen, Suzan Challis, (missing from photo) Theresa Cockburn and Ally Flynn — all Splurge for the Cure team members — aim to raise \$20,000 and walk 60 kilometres Sept. 11 and 12 in the Weekend to Cure Breast Cancer.

TEAMING UP FOR SHEILA

BY DEBORA KELLY
Staff Writer

At first, she couldn't admit she had found a lump in her breast.

Looking back a year-and-a-half later, Sheila Clark shakes her head slightly, knowing the significance of that discovery now, yet still feeling some sense of disbelief.

"I noticed a thickness — not a lump — just a thickening of the tissue," she says, recalling that day a year ago last February.

As her friend, hearing the details for the first time, I can't help but feel some disbelief, too, as I look at her, the picture of glowing health and composure, elegantly draped across a comfortable sofa in her Aurora home.

She did, though, see her doctor the following month. He didn't appear "overly concerned" but scheduled a mammogram and ultrasound. She wasn't worried when she left his office.

The doctor also referred her to an oncology specialist, however, an appointment was not available for four months. The results of the mammogram and ultrasound came back clean.

Just before she was to see the oncologist at York Central Hospital, her appointment was cancelled due to the SARS quarantine. She was rescheduled for October — eight months after her discovery — and sent for another mammogram and ultrasound.

Ironically, much of her time throughout this was focused on her volunteer work for the Bid for the Cure bachelor auction, a fundraising event for the Ontario chapter of the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

Two weeks before, she finally

saw the oncologist.

"As soon as he examined me, I knew it was over at that moment," she says ruefully. "In all the things I've read about since, in hindsight, it was so obvious. He knew immediately."

The specialist told Sheila a core biopsy was required.

"I still didn't fully comprehend the ramifications — it just didn't sink in."

Four days later, that all changed.

"That was the worst thing, sitting in the waiting room with my husband, waiting for those test results, knowing for sure, instinctively, that I had it."

She had infiltrating lobular carcinoma, which accounts for about 10 per cent of cases.

"My first thought was for my children. I can't die. I want to raise my kids. I want to see my grandkids. As a mother, that's where you go."

She called a family meeting on returning from the doctor's office.

"It's funny," she says, pausing and staring off for a minute. "That was the hardest part for me, to see them affected by this."

In November, her left breast was removed. Her doctor had recommended she have her lymph nodes removed also, as is routine with a tumour the size of hers — at this point, nine centimetres, or half her breast.

Then came chemotherapy.

Today, she looks more beautiful than ever, perhaps because, inconceivably, she feels she is better off for having cancer.

"So many blessings have come of this. It has changed her perspective of life and has been a huge growing experience for my family."

"Little things do not get to me in the way they used to. Honestly, it has been as good as it's been bad."

She is committed now to help raise money to provide support to women and their families, even with simple things such as cleaning and cooking.

Each day now, she realizes the promise of a new day. "And I thank God I won't live yesterday again."

She has motivated a group of us, the Splurge Girls, to take part in the Weekend to End Breast Cancer Sept. 10 to 12, walking 60 kilometres to raise money to fight breast cancer.

The Splurge Girls have been getting together monthly for years now. We have shared the joys and sorrows of life.

Our Splurge for the Cure team, including Sheila, myself, Suzan Challis, Beth Egan, Theresa Cockburn, Ally Flynn, Darcia Jensen and Claudine Hubbard (who walked last year in honour of her mother, a breast cancer survivor), has committed to raise \$20,000 for Princess Margaret Hospital to fund breast cancer research, education, services and care.

We've been training throughout the summer, logging hundreds of kilometres on our shoes. With participants required to raise \$2,000 each, fundraising is a challenge.

With some of us yet to reach our goal, we would immensely appreciate donations. Please visit www.endcancer.ca (<http://on.endcancer.ca/site/PageServer>), click 'donate'; a window will open where you type in our team name, Splurge for the Cure. Hit enter and select one of our names.

Briefly

Town's first YRT route opening Tuesday

Stouffville's new bus service is about to roll.

Service on the York Region Transit Route 9 begins Tuesday. The bus, YRT's first venture into Whitchurch-Stouffville, starts at Main Street and Park Drive.

It makes stops at the Stouffville Station, Parkview Village on the Ninth Line, Eastern Gate, Stouffville District Secondary School and Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Route 9 connects passengers to YRT routes across York Region. Transfers are made at Markham Stouffville Hospital and 16th Avenue and Ninth Line.

Meanwhile, passengers using the YRT bus to get to and from the Stouffville GO station can board the bus for 25 cents.

Regular bus fares are as follows: adults \$2.25; seniors \$1.30; high school students \$1.60; seniors \$1.30 and children \$1.

Passes containing 10 tickets are also available. Costs are \$74 for adults, \$52 for high school students and \$35 for seniors. There are no passes for children.

Tickets can be bought at Candlelight and Memories in downtown Stouffville and A&P, both on Main Street.

For more information, call 905-762-2100 or visit www.yorkregiontransit.com

NHL prospect plays Spirit

The Stouffville Spirit hosts a projected first-round 2005 NHL draft pick tonight.

The Spirit and St. Michael's Buzzers from Toronto meet at 7:30 at the Stouffville Arena in a Provincial Junior A Hockey League pre-season game. Andrew Cogliano is the star of the Buzzers and the entire league. See story on page 19.

Quoteworthy

'She was just full of life, full of everything'

Jeanette Montgomery, on her niece, Janette, who was killed in a car crash. See story on page 1.

Contacting Us

Have a news tip? Please:

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