

Walkers set to tackle Yonge Street marathon

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STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Jonathon Mishrigi, Andrew Rossi, Jody Chrobak, Dan Rossi and Mark MacDonnell walk along Yonge Street in Thornhill. The five York residents will walk the length of Yonge from Rainy River to Toronto starting tomorrow to raise money for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of York.

off from summer jobs to help what they believe is one of the region's most meaningful community services.

"Big Brothers and Big Sisters is one of the most underfunded charities in Canada," said Ms Chrobak, a University of Guelph student. "We are trying to raise funds for this great foundation and awareness how people can truly make a difference in the lives of today's youth."

The group has been busy with logistics and sponsorships. The Ontario Provincial Police will escort the walkers until they reach York, where regional police will accompany the fivesome the rest of the way.

The team departed by vehicle for

Rainy River Tuesday after a kickoff at the Markham Civic Centre.

En route to the starting point, they will visit local Big Brothers and Big Sisters chapters, dropping off supplies to be used on the walk.

To date, New Balance has provided each walker with three pairs of shoes and Russell Athletic has clothed the group. Beverages are courtesy of 7-Eleven. Kelsey's Markham is selling bracelets to aid the cause.

Ms Chrobak and company still require support, including gas money and food, however.

"We've all trained but there will be some isolated stretches up north," she said. "The mental aspect will be the big challenge. It'll be tough doing the same thing day after day."

The equivalent of a full daily marathon will begin at 3:30 a.m., Mr. Rossi said.


"That's when we have reveille," he said. "We'll walk until noon and rest in the afternoon, out of the sun, then walk again from about 4 until 8 at night. We'll walk between 10 and 12 hours everyday."

Big Brothers and Sisters and supporters are invited to walk with the troop in each town. Contributions will be collected along the way. A celebratory barbecue is planned in Newmarket Aug. 8 and everyone will be invited to join in the last 40 kms to the finish line Aug. 9.

To lend support, make a monetary or merchandise donation or get sponsorship options, visit www.fivewithdrive.com or call Big Brothers and Sisters of York Region at 905-727-1251, ext. 311.

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