

# Humphrey family has history with ride

BY SANDRA BOLAN  
sbolan@yrmg.com

Over the past five years, horse back riders have raised more than \$90,000 for various charities, all in memory of Al Humphrey.

"That's not bad at all, is it," said Norma Humphrey, Al's widow.

This year, Mrs. Humphrey is hoping to raise \$30,000, which will be split equally between the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation's palliative care unit and the Make -A-Wish Foundation.

Last year's ride was its most successful to date with \$30,000 being raised and split equally between two charities.

"With the economy ... I thought if we could stay level with the previous year, but we surpassed it by quite a lot," she said of 2011.

Since 2007, the ride has raised \$93,000.

"I'd like to reach last year's (total). I don't know if we can because it's a whole new year and the economy hasn't rebounded a lot, especially in our field," Mrs. Humphrey said.

One Whitchurch-Stouffville resident doing his best to ensure the Al Humphrey Memorial Ride meets its fundraising target is Sandor Horvath.

The 72-year-old life-long horse lover is participating in the event for the first time this Aug. 5 and wants to raise \$5,000. He's already raised about \$4,000.

"I think it's very good for a one-man

operation," he said.

Before embarking on his fundraising campaign, Mr. Horvath met with Mrs. Humphrey and, among the various things they talked about, was how much last year's top fundraiser brought in.

Mrs. Humphrey said he told her he planned on beating that amount.

"I think it's wonderful," she said. "I think he went out with determination. ... He's approaching people I never thought of approaching. He's certainly proving he's not leaving any stone unturned. That's what you like, is enthusiasm."

### DIED IN 2006

Mr. Horvath decided to participate in the memorial ride because he wanted to do something for charity at least once in his life, he said.

The 25-kilometre route through the York Region Forest is expected to take him a number of hours to complete. For Mr. Horvath, who has a bad back, the day will be physically challenging, but "I'll just make the best of it".

Last year, the ride's organizing committee instituted a minimum donation of \$100 from each rider, along with the registration fee. This year, it has been upped to \$150.

"We do have to have a minimum because there were riders who ride and not raise pledges. That's not what the ride was designed for. It's to make money," Mrs. Humphrey said.

Registration fees ( \$70 from July 26 to

Aug. 4) pay for the amenities provided to the horses and riders the day of the event such as pre-ride coffee and breakfast, lunch and post-ride entertainment.

About 100 volunteers are needed to keep things running smoothly for the roughly 100 riders and their horses.

"If you can't ride, volunteer," Mrs. Humphrey suggested.

The rides were started many years ago by Mr. Humphrey who loved leading fellow riders through the trails around his Vandorf Road tack shop and then feeding them a home-cooked meal.

Mr. Humphrey charged riders \$5 each and donated all of that money to organizations such as the Community Association for Riding for the Disabled, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Palliative Care Network of York Region.

In 2006, Mr. Humphrey died from prostate cancer and his widow decided to honour his love for horses and charity by turning the annual event into a memorial ride. Other than a name change and the absence of Mr. Humphrey, not much has changed.

"I don't believe in repairing a wheel that isn't broken. That isn't to say we won't add features, because we may, especially if people have ideas that seem to be valued," Mrs. Humphrey said.

For more information and to register, go to <http://alhumphreymemorialride.com> There will be no event-day registration.



Ballantrae's Sandor Horvath, 72, wants to raise \$5,000 for the the Al Humphrey Memorial Ride Aug. 5.

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